

A THEOLOGY OF ENGAGEMENT: SCHLEIERMACHER  
ON THE RELATION OF GOD AND THE WORLD

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A Professional Project  
Presented to  
the Faculty of  
The School of Theology at Claremont

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In Partial Fulfillment  
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Doctor of Ministry

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by  
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To

Martin Luther King, Jr.

and

Dietrich Bonhoeffer

whose life and ministry

exemplified

a Theology of Engagement

## ABSTRACT

The most disturbing aspect of modern theology is its failure to bridge the gap between theory and practice. The cultural, political, and religious pluralism of this age challenges the Christian community in relation to the nature of its engagement in and with the world.

In order to elucidate this central problem in contemporary religious life, this study analyzes the theological method of one theologian who offers a solution to the problem. By his understanding of the relation of God and the World the nineteenth century theologian, Friedrich Ernst Daniel Schleiermacher, has made a vital contribution to theology for subsequent ages. His concern was to conceptualize this relationship in such a way as to provide a *praxis* foundation for speaking of God's relationship with creation. In this way Schleiermacher suggests a Theology of Engagement, a theology which remains true to the fundamental dialectic of human existence. A theology which becomes a model for functional ministry.

In the long course of its history, religion has frequently known the experience of 're-discovery'. In this matter it has not been distinguished from other spheres of human endeavour and achievement--the fluctuations of taste, the vicissitudes in creative endeavour in the arts and in the sciences. These have all known the youth of intensive creation, followed by periods of disintegration and hardening in which foreign influences have intruded and almost stifled the life that was there originally. Such periods have necessitated and produced the 'Renaissances', rebirths and rediscoveries of that which had been half or wholly lost with results of varying importance and of varying degrees of permanence. And these renaissances have usually been associated with and brought about by creative personalities who at the same time set in motion new impulses and ideas, so that the effect was more than a mere rediscovery. What had been rediscovered had been brought upon a higher plane of activity on which it effected new and significant combinations.

Rudolf Otto

## PREFACE

The present study grew out of a concern on the part of the author to come to grips with the theological understanding of God's presence and activity in the world. It is an attempt to get at a much larger question than just the correlation of God and the World. Therefore it is an introduction to understanding the experience of this relationship.

Friedrich Schleiermacher was chosen because of the excitement and possibilities he initiated in discussing this problem. I was first introduced to Schleiermacher through his book *On Religion: Speeches To Its Cultured Despisers*, in my undergraduate education. I was deeply impressed with his style of writing in this book, and came to feel at home with his talk of 'feeling'. This I closely identified with what I had known all my life as 'soul'. For the first time a white theologian was describing the experience of finite/infinite reality in a way that was somewhat consonant with my experience and heritage. I was deeply impressed! My study of Schleiermacher has continued to this day, and even though not reflected in this brief attempt at clarity, I have spent many hours with him endeavoring to understand the direction toward which he is pointing.

The most impressive aspect of Schleiermacher's thought for me however, is the pragmatic value he placed upon thought of God. For him and a few others, two of which this project is dedicated, theology could not be done in the arm chair or merely in the ivory tower of the academy. But for Schleiermacher theology means engagement in the world,

that is, a life which mirrors one's theological reflection. It is my hope that more than anything else this emphasis would be felt as the underlying focal point and purpose of this study.

I am grateful to the following people for helping me in my theological journey to this point: Professor Herbert Prince of Point Loma College, who by his excitement and control of the subject of theology inspired me to seriously read and study for myself; Professor Jack C. Verheyden of the School of Theology at Claremont, for his aid in understanding Schleiermacher's point of departure, and the suggestion of new possibilities for development of his thought; Professor J. Deotis Roberts of Howard University School of Religion, for reading the project and offering helpful criticism, direction, and encouragement; Reverend James M. Lawson, Jr., who introduced me to the term, 'Theology of Engagement', while applying it to the life, ministry, and theology of Martin Luther King, Jr.; and for a host of significant others who have encouraged me, prayed for me, and believed in what God is doing in my life.

## Chapter 1

## INTRODUCTION

This project addresses the problem of the importance of the relation of God and the World and the religious life, in the thought of Friedrich Ernst Daniel Schleiermacher (1768-1834). The major effort is an attempt to adequately conceptualize how he understood this relation. How this understanding shaped his theological method and general contributions. And how this is important for the contemporary models of ministry.

A proper perspective of the theological method of Schleiermacher, can largely aid the theological student in his or her debate with the problems of modern thought. It can also enhance one's perspective of the history of theology, and is a proper foundation for anticipating its future.

This project is useful as a model for professional ministry. This can be seen in the emphasis upon a theology of engagement, which is characteristic of Schleiermacher's relationship with his age. His social activities, and ministerial activities are based upon his conception of the relation of God and the World. That is, the 'feeling of absolute dependence' serves as the impulse for his 'sense and taste for the Infinite in the finite'.

This project undertakes to assess the effectiveness of Schleiermacher's point of departure in his theological work. It aims at elucidating the relation between theology and social realities.

*Definition of Terms*

There are many terms which are used in this discussion which have been overused. It is therefore necessary to redefine these terms for use in this discussion. This is especially seen with the meaning of certain German words used by Schleiermacher himself which are easily misunderstood.

*Gefühl* - is translated 'feeling'. This is not to mean a subjective emotive quality of human existence, but a common awareness designating receptivity or openness.<sup>1</sup>

*Ganze* - is translated 'whole'. In his earlier writings, Schleiermacher speaks of objective reality as a unifying whole. The word *Universum* is also used, while not entirely clear, is used here to refer to the intercommunion of natural order, culture, and the experience of 'feeling' dependent on these structures.<sup>2</sup>

Community - is here utilized as common participation and qualified continuity. There is a participation in the 'whole' of historical reality of humanity, which implies God, i.e. as causality (*Ursächlichkeit*) of such community.<sup>3</sup>

Absolute - the word *schlechthin* is difficult to translate. Here it is translated simple, sheer, and unqualified, as it refers to the 'feeling of dependence'. According to the Thônes marginalia,

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<sup>1</sup>See footnote 23, page 39.

<sup>2</sup>See footnote 27, page 26 for further explanation.

<sup>3</sup>See footnote 13, page 58.

Schleiermacher used it to mean absolute, hence meaning free, unrestricted. It is important to see that for Schleiermacher what is absolute is the dependence. So that there is a distinction between this usage and the normative philosophical usage as e.g. in Hegel.<sup>4</sup>

Pantheism - this term literally means God is all that there is, and that all is God.<sup>5</sup> There is probably no serious thinker that has taken this in the literal sense i.e. that one could walk on God, or touch God. Pantheism is best defined as a philosophical or theological stance that recognizes the conception of God and the World's close or complete unifying relation. There are various forms of pantheism that emphasize more or less this totality. Spinoza has been chosen as a model since he was a leader of a German movement which influenced Schleiermacher. The Spinozic ethos pervaded the philosophical theology of his time.

#### *Scope and Limitations*

The present project sets out to elucidate the basis of Schleiermacher's theology on the explication of the relation of God and the World, and how that understanding for him bridges the gap between *theoria* and *praxis*. This gap has become the modern theological problem,

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<sup>4</sup>Richard R. Niebuhr, "Schleiermacher and the Names of God," *Journal for Theology and the Church*, VII, (1970), 183, n.15.

<sup>5</sup>The word was first used in 1705 by John Toland in his *Socinianism turly stated*. Toland's hostile critic, Fay, used the word in 1709 and it speedily became common. See, Alasdair MacIntyre, "Pantheism," in *The Encyclopedia of Philosophy* (New York: Macmillan, 1967), VI, 34.

or perhaps better stated the relation between religion and culture. A problem which Paul Tillich has devoted much energy toward conceptualizing.

This intention relates to the previous work done which will be later observed in the following ways. First, it takes into account the influence which Schleiermacher had on these giants of theology. Second, it seeks to listen to Schleiermacher in a much broader way. Rudolf Otto centered in on his early writings, Karl Barth neglected to acknowledge his indebtedness to him and failed to adequately explain the difference in their methodology, while Søren Kierkegaard misinterpreted his nature system and his use of Spinoza's influence.

The precise intent of this project is to show the importance of Schleiermacher to the history of theology, and to expose the relevance of his theological legacy. Especially as it relates to the problem of religion and social interaction, religious pluralism, theology and its engagement in the world of objective reality, and it therefore stresses 'the religious life'. I intend to be responsible for a limited and brief explication of basic elements of Schleiermacher's thought on the religious existence. In this way the study serves as an introduction to the Theology of Engagement as it is found in the thinking of Friedrich Schleiermacher.

The particular problem of correct understanding of what is meant by 'the religious life', is vital in light of subsequent work, which is a reflection of this formulation. The explicit and implicit tension at work in this methodology has become a challenge and model for contemporary thought. The issues in discussion here relate to

essential categories of primordial talk of the relation of God and the World. Theologians are forced to ask questions which reveal how this is to be understood: Is religion a good thing? What relationship is there between religion and the human predicament? Can religionless Christianity be a real option for modern people?<sup>6</sup>

It is not the intent to present or question in detail the Schleiermacherian doctrine of God. Nor is this study to examine any other major doctrine, e.g. Christology, Ecclesiology, etc. Rather to examine the implications of the relation of God and the World as expressed in the nature of 'the religious life'.

#### *Procedure for Integration*

There is a sense in which the modern churchperson needs to reaffirm the aspect of Christianity (which is its heart) that is in constant engagement and dialogue with the culture. Also to affirm how one's understanding of the relation of God and the World dictates

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<sup>6</sup>For further discussion of these matters the reader is referred to Alan Richardson, *Religion in Contemporary Debate* (Philadelphia: Westminster Press, 1966), and Eugene W. Lyman, *The Meaning and Truth of Religion* (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1933). These studies do a thorough task of debating these questions in broad detail. Another book exposing the implications of this discussion is John B. Cobb, *God and the World* (Philadelphia: Westminster Press, 1969). Here the formulations of the doctrine of God in light of secularity's demand for significant definition of God, are highlighted. A dissertation presenting Schleiermacher's notion of individuality is useful: M. Riemer, "Theory of Social Behavior." This study is based upon a newly found manuscript where Schleiermacher develops the notion of a plurality of individuals sharing something in common in the social context. [Barry A. Woodbridge, "The Role of Text and Emergent Possibilities in the Interpretation of Christian Tradition: A Process Hermeneutic in Response to the German Hermeneutical Discussion" (unpublished Ph.D. dissertation, School of Theology at Claremont, 1976), p. 15]

activity in the world. This project integrates theological and functional disciplines in that it provides a model for ministry, i.e. engagement in world affairs as a Christian, and thus being a light in the midst of darkness.

The method used is both descriptive and analytical.

#### *Chapter Outline*

The purpose of chapter two is to provide a hermeneutical framework for understanding Schleiermacher by presenting the most important critiques of his theology. This includes Rudolf Otto, Karl Barth, and Soren Kierkegaard.

The purpose of chapter three is to describe the intellectual and religious climate to which Schleiermacher's theology emerged and was operative. It consists of brief expositions of the Enlightenment, Romanticism, and German Idealism. It shows the significance of Schleiermacher's first book *Reden*, and how it raises the problem discussed here.

Chapter four is an exposition of the religious life, and how the relation is seen in personal and world kinship.

The fifth chapter deals with the problem of the accusation of pantheism due to Schleiermacher's emphasis upon the relation of God and the World and how this theme is used in his work. In order to provide a framework for applying an answer to the question, the seventeenth century philosopher Benedictus de Spinoza (1632-1677) is used as a model of pantheistic thought. It is necessary to note, however, that Spinoza never referred to himself as a pantheist, and Schleiermacher fought against this charge all of his life.

Chapter six addresses the issue of problem of objectivity and subjectivity which is raised by 'the religious life'.

Chapter seven is a conclusion which points out the importance of Schleiermacher and the problem of theory and praxis.

The appendix is a comparison of Josiah Royce and Ludwig Feuerbach with the thought of Schleiermacher.

## Chapter 2

## HERMENEIA:

## WORK PREVIOUSLY DONE IN THE FIELD

We have forgotten that the literary work is not a manipulatable object completely at our disposal; it is a human voice out of the past, a voice which must somehow be brought to life. Dialogue, not dissection, opens up the world of a literary work.<sup>1</sup>

Unfortunately work in the thought of Schleiermacher has been highly neglected. For a long time he was written off as a pantheist and an adherent of heretical theology. It was due to the Barthian captivity, that Schleiermacher was thrust to the background and no longer taken seriously. As a result there is little significant scholarly and fair work done on his thought.

*Rudolf Otto*

Rudolf Otto was one of the few theological thinkers who incorporated the basic premises of Schleiermacher's work into his program. His *magnum opus*, *The Idea of the Holy*,<sup>2</sup> is reminiscent of the Schleiermacherian point of departure, but neglects the later development so vital for a mature expression of his work.

In his earlier writings, Otto compared Schleiermacher with Jacob Friedrich Fries, who as he saw it, provided the most successful

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<sup>1</sup>Richard E. Palmer, *Hermeneutics* (Evanston: Northwestern University Press, 1969) p. 7.

<sup>2</sup>Rudolf Otto, *The Idea of the Holy* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1923)

method of scientific religion that goes back to that massive and systematic investigation of the rational principles of religion, in the human intellect which German Idealism undertook in varied phases.<sup>3</sup>

This method of criticism was seen as the approach which revealed Kant's disastrous basic errors, i.e. the fallacious inference from the a priority of knowledge to the ideality of the known, the object of that knowledge.<sup>4</sup> He understood Fries particular theory of *Ahndung* (feeling) as having close points of contact with Schleiermacher's "the contemplation and sense of the universe." However, in regards to the matter of dependence one upon the other, he denies that. Otto believed Fries represented the Kantian criticism of judgment, and Schleiermacher as contending in inspired guesswork, which in it has something of the method of 'happy thoughts'. This he thought was characteristic of the Romantic school of which Schleiermacher was once a part. This tendency contends Otto, is seen in the *Reden*,<sup>5</sup> as the arbitrary decree of genius replacing the solid reasoning from philosophy and history, and is therefore ". . . dim, poetic twilight."<sup>6</sup>

Otto's criticism of the later Schleiermacher receives even less enjoyment. He detects in Schleiermacher's later development the original idea struggling towards clearer expression, and of course

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<sup>3</sup>Rudolf Otto, *The Philosophy of Religion* (New York: Smith, 1909), p. 16.

<sup>4</sup>Ibid., p. 11.

<sup>5</sup>Friedrich Schleiermacher, *Reden Über die Religion* (Gotha: Berthes, 1888).

<sup>6</sup>Otto, *The Philosophy of Religion*, p. 23.

nothing is left of the earlier wealth and exuberance but the "feeling of sheer dependence," a very one-sided and inadequate description of religious feeling, which in Fries, according to Otto, has found a much more varied and precise development.<sup>7</sup>

Otto continues his praise for Schleiermacher by indicating the main difference between the two. He says Schleiermacher succeeds with difficulty, and always as if it were a task of minor importance, in establishing the connection between religious feeling, and religious conviction. Because feeling without conviction would inevitably lack the support of principle and justice.

Otto thinks religious conviction must be true and must be able to prove its truth, i.e. it must lay claim to be knowledge. This is why in the final analysis we leave Fries as attempting to discover the real nature of belief and to make the truth of it secure, and Schleiermacher "beating the air."<sup>8</sup>

In his work *Naturalism and Religion*,<sup>9</sup> in describing the fundamental principle of Naturalism, Otto compares Schleiermacher's contention that the universe must be experienced in intuition and feeling with his fifth proposition of naturalism. That is, the intuition of reality as deep impression; inward experience; apprehension of nature, the world and history, in the depths of the spirit. This is akin to the platonic recollection (anamnesis). Unfortunately Otto saw this kind of intuition, which he thought to be characteristic of Schleiermacher, as

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<sup>7</sup>Ibid.

<sup>8</sup>Ibid., p. 24.

<sup>9</sup>Rudolf Otto, *Naturalism and Religion* (New York: Putnam, 1907)

in the place of mind and when expressed must be done so in fanatic or romantic pomposity.

In *The Idea of the Holy*<sup>10</sup> Otto credits Schleiermacher with having isolated a very important element in what he calls the creature feeling, i.e. the feeling of dependence. But he goes on to criticize Schleiermacher for making the distinction merely of that between 'absolute' and 'relative' dependence, and therefore a difference of degree and not of intrinsic quality. That is because of other regions of experience than the religious occasion the feeling. He also accuses him of making the religious category merely a category of self-valuation, in the sense of self-depreciation. He perceived Schleiermacher as taking for a basis and point of departure what is merely a secondary effect. He set out to teach a consciousness of the religious object only by way of an inference from the shadow it casts upon self-consciousness.

Nonetheless by his stress upon the consciousness of being conditioned (as effect by cause) Schleiermacher was the first to overcome Lutheran rationalism. That is, the 'feeling of unqualified dependence' is the correlate to causality, which is the rational side of the idea of God.

Otto detects two defects in Schleiermacher's system. He assumes falsely that this faculty of divination is a universal one. Secondly, his lack of good use of the Bible in a detailed fashion.

It can be said that Schleiermacher and Otto differ in their

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<sup>10</sup>Otto, *The Idea of the Holy* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1923).

stress upon the notion of creativity. Schleiermacher posits a *Geschaffensein* (consciousness of createdness) while Otto posits a *Geschopfflichkeit* (consciousness of creaturehood). The fact of being created vis a vis the status of the creature. Otto saw Schleiermacher as feeling after the faculty or capacity of deeply absorbed contemplation, when confronted by the vast, living totality and reality of things as it is in nature and history while he saw himself as following more thoroughly the rediscovery of the religious as a distinctive category. Although Otto criticizes Schleiermacher often, he nonetheless had great respect for him and truly followed his lead. He credits Schleiermacher with the re-discovery of the essence of religion.<sup>11</sup> He understands the sole importance of the Romantic circle as serving as a stimulus to the religious genius of Schleiermacher, which is most characteristic in his *Reden*.<sup>12</sup>

And hereby Schleiermacher not only rediscovered the sensus numinis in a vague and general way but he opened for his age a new door to old and forgotten ideas: to divine marvel instead of supernaturalists miracle, to living revelation instead of instilled doctrine, to the manifestation of the divinely infinite in event, person, and history, and especially to a new understanding and valuation of biblical history as divine revelation. Without falling back again into the trammels of a primitive supernaturalism he prepared the way to a rediscovery not only of religion but of Christian religion and to a new interpretation of Christian religion, which was better and more modern than the old orthodox or rationalistic theology could give.<sup>13</sup>

This statement is made particularly in the background of the Enlightenment thought prevalent in Schleiermacher's time.

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<sup>11</sup>Rudolf Otto, *Religious Essays* (London: Oxford University Press, 1931), p. 68.

<sup>12</sup>Schleiermacher.

<sup>13</sup>Otto, *Religious Essays*, p. 17.

The importance of the work of Rudolf Otto, lies in his rediscovery of the holy as an independent category. This is in contrast to the traditional identification of the holy with absolute moral good, so that the holy is placed beyond the realm of the ethical and the rational. This emphasis which is a result of Schleiermacher's work, leads to a new view of comparative religion, and the Bible and Christianity. Otto, following Schleiermacher, rediscovered the non-rational element in traditional theology (Luther) and religion.<sup>14</sup>

*Karl Barth*

The most decisive critique of Schleiermacher in the twentieth century has come through the dictates of Barth. He is seen as the progenitor of twentieth century theology. His theology of crisis, was a theological *volte-face* in view of the preceding theology. With his dialectical theology, presented in the *Epistle to the Romans*,<sup>15</sup> Barth "literally stood the theology of the nineteenth century on its head, turning it upside-down."<sup>16</sup>

Karl Barth does however place Schleiermacher in a strategic spot in the history of nineteenth century thought.

The first place in a history of the theology of the most recent times belongs and will always belong to Schleiermacher, and he has no rival . . . . Nobody can say today whether we have really

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<sup>14</sup>H. Zahrnt, *The Question of God*, trans. by R. A. Wilson (New York: Harvest, 1966), p. 48.

<sup>15</sup>Karl Barth, *Epistle to the Romans*, trans. by Edwyn C. Hoskyns (London: Oxford University Press, 1933)

<sup>16</sup>Zahrnt, p. 38.

overcome his influence, or whether we are still at heart children of his age. . . . We have to do with a hero, the like of which is but seldom bestowed upon theology.<sup>17</sup>

But Barth proceeds to criticize him for his treatment of Christology, the tendency of wanting to be both a theologian and a modern man, and basic anthropocentric themes in his theology.

Barth attacks Schleiermacher for wanting to maintain a theological profession and a modern personal perspective. He calls Schleiermacher a philosopher of religion and states that he is not a Christian theologian because he is an apologist. Further charging that his emphasis upon addressing the modern culture on its own terms makes his apologetics immanent and negative,<sup>18</sup> and therefore theology turning against the Christian tradition. He understood Schleiermacher's theology as one of feeling or the theology of awareness, "or to put it more exactly, the theology of pious self-awareness."<sup>19</sup>

Barth posits Christ as Schleiermacher's main problem. That is, the Lord Jesus is a problem child for him.<sup>20</sup> But for Barth his whole theological point of departure is incorrect. Instead of beginning with human existence, Barth wants to begin with God as wholly other. God as standing beyond and above the world, and then proceed to speak of mankind in terms of the broken relationship between God and humans. Schleiermacher begins by affirming the eternal relationship between God

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<sup>17</sup>Karl Barth, *Protestant Theology in the Nineteenth Century* (Valley Forge: Judson Press, 1973), pp. 425, 426, 427.

<sup>18</sup>Ibid., p. 447.

<sup>19</sup>Ibid., p. 454.

<sup>20</sup>Ibid., p. 461. Barth also contends that Ludwig Feuerbach has taken Schleiermacher to his logical conclusion, p. 534. See Appendix.

and humanity, as it is present in creation. This critique of the father of modern theology dominates the following work done in this century, and it has been referred to as the Barthian captivity. As a result of this theological captivity, Schleiermacher was dismissed as an heretic and neglected as irrelevant.

The interesting point is that Barth was very much a Schleiermacherian both in early life and in some ways throughout his career. He came to read and follow the thought of Schleiermacher while he studied in Berlin. And he was for years the leading light in his thought.

In Berlin . . . along with Wilhelm Herrmann's *Ethics*, I bought myself a copy of Schleiermacher's *Speeches on Religion to its Cultured Despisers*, in R. Otto's edition, which I still use. Eureka! I had evidently been looking for "the Immediate," and had now found it, not with Hermann Kutter, . . . but with Schleiermacher.<sup>21</sup>

Barth was highly influenced by Wilhelm Herrmann who sought to combine Kant and Schleiermacher in his theology. This interest in the writings of Schleiermacher carried over into his pastoral duties and image.<sup>22</sup>

It was not until the outbreak of World War I that Barth broke with the extent of his preoccupation with Schleiermacherian theology. It was out of the Safenwill pastorate that his change emerged with the publication of his *Epistle to the Romans*, and under the sway of Emil Brunner.<sup>23</sup> Then Schleiermacher represented the 'double madness' which was a combination of the war, his theological teachers and European

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<sup>21</sup> Karl Barth, *Nachwort*, p. 291, cited in Eberhard Busch, *Karl Barth* (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1976), p. 40.

<sup>22</sup> Busch, p. 62.

<sup>23</sup> Ibid., p. 114.

socialism.<sup>24</sup>

There are however a number of ways in which Barth never departed from Schleiermacher. One is seen in his placing of Christ at the center of talk about God as did Herrmann. Martin Redeker has made the distinction between the Christocentric (Schleiermacher) and Christomonistic (Barth)<sup>25</sup> views of theology. A second way is seen in the production of the *Dogmatics*, which closely follow Schleiermacher's understanding of the confessional church as their foundation.

Barth remained a student, though rebellious, of Schleiermacher, and was one of the first and last to view him in light of his sermons.<sup>26</sup> He worked in later years with a retrieved bust of Schleiermacher in front of him, and taught classes on him in spite of student response.

For all my opposition I could never think about Schleiermacher without feeling the way that Doctor Bartolo puts so well in *The Marriage of Figaro*: "An inner voice always spoke to his advantage." I can imagine a very happy reunion with Schleiermacher in heaven.<sup>27</sup>

#### *Søren Kierkegaard*

Most twentieth century theology is a reaction to nineteenth century theology. This is certainly seen in Kierkegaard, who read Schleiermacher with much interest and purpose. He believed Schleiermacher represented the first level of genuine orthodox dogmatics, and would one day come again to great importance, even though he showed

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<sup>24</sup>Ibid., p. 82.

<sup>25</sup>Martin Redeker, *Schleiermacher: Life and Thought* (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1973), p. 149.

<sup>26</sup>Busch, p. 151.

<sup>27</sup>Barth, *Nachwort*, p. 297f, 310.

some heterodox elements.<sup>28</sup> He believed this because of Schleiermacher's concern with being rather than with becoming.<sup>29</sup> He credits him with the incorporation of the concept of wonder in its inwardness within the system rather than keeping it outside as a prolegomenon. It was this wonder and self-awareness, as completely new Christian self-awareness that influenced Kierkegaard's writing and subsequently Martin Heidegger and Paul Tillich. Kierkegaard's main contention is that Schleiermacher has falsified Christianity in that he has conceived it esthetically-methaphysically merely as a condition, whereas for him Christianity is essentially to be conceived ethically as striving. The former placed Christianity in the sphere of becoming, while the latter stipulates a condition of religiousness in the sphere of being (*voeren*) comparing Schleiermacher with Spinoza.<sup>30</sup>

These basic reactions to Schleiermacher, have determined the theological mood of contemporary theology. Each of the above theologians have used Schleiermacher while reacting to him, and thus have influenced the modern world of thought.

These were presented in an effort to better acquaint the reader with the dynamic at work in responding to Schleiermacher. It is also necessary as background for understanding the problem discussed here. The next chapter will reveal the cultural background in which Schleiermacher emerged and worked.

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<sup>28</sup>Søren Kierkegaard, *Journals and Papers* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1975), IV, 13.

<sup>29</sup>Ibid., IV, 628.

<sup>30</sup>Ibid., IV, 14-15.

## Chapter 3

## CULTURAL AMBIENCE

You must understand an idea out of the source from which it comes. You must know the negative implications, the struggle in which a person was involved, the enemies against which he fought, and the presuppositions which he accepted. If you do not know these things, everything becomes distorted when dealing with an important figure like Schleiermacher.<sup>1</sup>

*The Enlightenment*

The German *Aufklärung* served as the ambience against which Schleiermacher emerged as a critical and powerful thinker. This was the mood of intellectual affirmation. The age that responded to the seventeenth century philosophical categories, and of confessionalism which began with the eighteenth century. Referred to as the Age of Reason, the Enlightenment found its roots in Renaissance humanism, Socinianism, and the Deism of the seventeenth century.<sup>2</sup> This was an age in which philosophy, science, and culture went through profound transformations. The philosophy of this century was relieved of its dependence upon theology as its handmaiden (*ancilla theologiae*). The search for rational knowledge was characterized by a distinct autonomous spirit.

New discoveries in the field of natural science led to the upsurgence of the free analytical spirit. "The empirical investigation

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<sup>1</sup>Paul Tillich, *A History of Christian Thought* (New York: Simon & Schuster, 1967), p. 387.

<sup>2</sup>Bengt Hägglund, *History of Theology* (St. Louis: Concordia, 1968), p. 335.

of the world came to be of primary interest."<sup>3</sup> The picture of the world was significantly altered.

Even more profound was the understanding of human reason which emerged. Human reason was seen as the necessary component to control and change the world and cultural environment. Along with this emphasis was the search for a natural ethic as a common basis for moral action.

There are few centuries which are so completely permeated by the idea of intellectual progress as was the Enlightenment. "Reason became the unifying and central point of this century, expressing all that it longs and strives for, and all that it achieves."<sup>4</sup> As this concept is applied to theology there is a break between revelation and natural law.

If we were to look for a general characterization of the age of the Enlightenment, the traditional answer would be that its fundamental feature is obviously a critical and skeptical attitude toward religion.<sup>5</sup>

This does not mean there was an overall rejection of religion, but an attempt to make it reasonable and acceptable on rational terms.

Immanuel Kant has correctly estimated the nature of the Enlightenment:

Enlightenment is man's exodus from his self-incurred tutelage. Tutelage is the inability to use one's understanding without the guidance of another person. This tutelage is self-incurred if its cause lies not in any weakness of the understanding, but is indecision and lack of courage to use the mind without the guidance

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<sup>3</sup>Ibid., p. 336.

<sup>4</sup>Ernst Cassirer, *The Philosophy of the Enlightenment* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1951), p. 5.

<sup>5</sup>Ibid., p. 134.

of another 'Dare to know' (*sapere aude*). Have the courage to use your own understanding; this is the motto of the Enlightenment.<sup>6</sup>

Even though Schleiermacher shares in the mood of the Enlightenment in his early years, he nonetheless made one of the most outstanding contributions to the history of theology through his response to this rational system of his day.<sup>7</sup> By the end of the eighteenth century the situation of theology was unstable. The traditional doctrines had been undermined and their defenders had offered unstable foundations for their support. Deism was dying of inanity. Due to the influence of Kant the great speculative systems were without merit. By Kant's effort, practical reason had subordinated religion to morality and theology to ethics. Therefore theology was suffering both in content and method.<sup>8</sup>

This was the way in which Schleiermacher emerges as the theologian of modern thought. Due to his grasp of the classical philosophy, the prevalent thought, and general knowledge of theology, he was able to respond to this problem. As a young man he had been highly influenced by Moravian Christian principles and maintained a deep and abiding sensitivity to the religious life. This is especially seen in the *Speeches of 1799*. In this work he asserted in response to rationalism

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<sup>6</sup>Immanuel Kant, "Beantwortung der Frage: Was ist Aufklarung?" in his *Werke*, 1v, 169.

<sup>7</sup>See Martin Redeker, *Schleiermacher* (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1973), p. 13f; and Albert L. Blackwell, "Schleiermacher's Sermon at Nathanael's Grave," *Journal of Religion*, LVII (January 1977) 67.

<sup>8</sup>George Cross, *The Theology of Schleiermacher* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1911), p. 105.

that religion consists not in intellectual or moralistic elements, but in an independent area in the life of the spirit.

. . . Belief must be something different from a mixture of opinion about God and the world, and of precepts for one life or for two. Piety cannot be an instinct craving for a mess of metaphysical and ethical crumbs.<sup>9</sup>

*Romanticism*

One of the most decisive experiences for the young Schleiermacher, was his association with the circle of Berlin intellectuals known as the Romantics. It was due to the sway of Friedrich Schlegel that he came fully to appreciate the Romantic spirit.

Romanticism has not been a very easy term to define. It is generally used to refer to the group of young middle class intellectuals and authors who responded to the Enlightenment, and is dated approximately 1770-1848.<sup>10</sup> They saw their movement as a revolt against what they regarded as the fixed, outworn canons of preceding generations.<sup>11</sup> They wanted to abandon uniformity and affirm the essence of individuality. The group of German intellectuals, authors, and artists of which Schleiermacher was a part, around 1800, exhibited glimmerings of Romantic self-consciousness.

Here the rational schemes which were characteristic of the German Enlightenment were challenged, and the soul of Romantic disposition expressed:

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<sup>9</sup>Friedrich Schleiermacher, *On Religion* (New York: Harper & Row, 1958), p. 31.

<sup>10</sup>H. E. Hugo, *The Portable Romantic Reader* (New York: Viking, 1957), p. 1.

<sup>11</sup>Ibid., p. 2.

To watch the progress of the eighteenth century is to observe the gradual intrusion of such terms as intuition, inspiration; taste, the moral sense, sensibility, and to note their slow victory over a drier vocabulary. It would be foolish to assert that men suddenly started feeling and stopped thinking. At the same time one cannot deny that *feeling* came to take on dimensions hitherto ignored or minimized.<sup>12</sup>

The hero of the preceding age, the ideal of the philosopher-gentleman, was losing its hold on young people in search of a better world.<sup>13</sup> The Romantic person shared an "acute emotional sensibility, which raises them above the less sensitive brothers, and an awareness of not belonging to the existing social order."<sup>14</sup>

With this reaction to the previous generation was an affirmation of "tender passion"--love which came to be exalted above all other feelings. Their contention was that the Age of Reason did not sufficiently recognize the charms and reality of love.

The Romantics suggested, as had Dante, that love was a route by which the time-bound individual might learn a vision of ultimate truth, a glimpse of that world which stands behind or above our meager existence. Hence love was a state of being that was eagerly to be coveted, not for purposes of physical satisfaction, but rather because the attention of one soul for another was a guarantee that the entire universe was permeated with similar energy and spirit.<sup>15</sup>

Also key to the Romantic spirit was the conception of nature. From previous times the word nature had meant the sum total of existence, i.e. the whole cosmos and its laws and activity.<sup>16</sup> The movement however, distinguished human nature and the world of nature. So that the term was far more limited yet more creative for understanding human

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<sup>12</sup>Ibid., p. 4-5.

<sup>13</sup>Ibid., p. 5.

<sup>14</sup>Ibid.

<sup>15</sup>Ibid., p. 7-8.

<sup>16</sup>Ibid., p. 16.

existence. This difference can also be seen in the theology of the time.

The eighteenth-century philosophers had made much of natural theology as opposed to revealed theology; that is, they held that the presence of God in the universe could be proved by an examination of the structure of the world. Since the world appeared to act in accordance with general scientific laws, and laws are created by intellect, reasoning by analogy would lead to establishing an Intelligence who made the cosmos and has continued to stand behind its operations. This was quite in keeping with deistic tenets.<sup>17</sup>

The Romantic spirit of course rejected this view of the relation of God and the World. Their emphasis was rather upon the primacy of intuitive thinking, i.e. "the eyes of the soul seeing farther and deeper than the eyes of the mind."<sup>18</sup> And this was the basis of the Romantic world-view.

That Schleiermacher was a member of this group of Romantics is certainly true. However, he was not completely taken up into their hold when it came to expressing the relation of God and the World as it is revealed in the religious life. Schleiermacher does maintain his individuality, an emphasis he had prior to his encounter with the Romantics.<sup>19</sup>

Some envisage Schleiermacher's *Reden* as the first serious and deliberate attempt to formulate a distinctively 'Romantic' ethics, to introduce into moral philosophy the maxim which had been given aesthetic application in the writings of the Schlegels.<sup>20</sup>

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<sup>17</sup>Ibid., p. 18.

<sup>18</sup>Ibid.

<sup>19</sup>Redeker, p. 33. See esp. Jack Forstman, *A Romantic Triangle: Schleiermacher and Early German Romanticism* (Missoula: Scholars Press, 1977).

<sup>20</sup>Arthur O. Lovejoy, *The Great Chain of Being* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1948), p. 307.

The key to understanding the beginnings of Schleiermacher's theology of engagement is understanding this early relationship. The first attempt at writing for him was an instant success. The *Reden* made him a hero and an enemy overnight. Many of his contemporaries used his first two works (*Soliloquies*) as a religious and ethical devotional book. The following passage recorded in the autobiography of Claus Harms sums up Schleiermacher's relationship to many of his age:

In my final academic year I read Schleiermacher's *Speeches*; they killed rationalism for me. I cannot say it more clearly; here began what I call the hour of birth for my higher life. I received from this book an impetus toward an unceasing momentum.<sup>21</sup>

#### *German Idealism*

Schleiermacher lived in a time when one of the most important philosophical movements of history was taking place. This movement was inaugurated by Immanuel Kant, and later developed by Fichte, Schelling and Hegel.<sup>22</sup> There are two basic periods of German Idealism, characterized by a close cooperation of philosophical thought and poetic imagination. The world of the German Idealist recognized an opposition between reality and the sphere of ideals. In this context, reality is viewed as the realm of objects, while ideas are seen as the realm of aims, ends, and purposes.

Due to the Kantian emphasis upon morals in the early period

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<sup>21</sup>Redeker, p. 34.

<sup>22</sup>The following historical account of the philosophical milieu contemporaneous with Schleiermacher, is found in Richard Kroner, "The Year 1800 in the Development of German Idealism," *Review of Metaphysics*, I,4 (June 1948)

there was a reflection on practical principles. Since the common person was seen as the moral person, philosophy had to trust the principles which underlined the consciousness of the common person. There existed an ultimate gulf between natural causality and moral responsibility, between necessity and moral freedom, between phenomenal reality and ethical reality.

The later period of German Idealism, which was developed by Schelling and Hegel, was less concerned with practical issues, or with the ideals of the moral person. Here intuition, imagination, and contemplation, became the focus. The speculative nature was hailed and humanity thrust to the forefront as genius, thus a *theos anar*. The former period had denied that by conscious activity the ultimate could be grasped; this, however, was affirmed by the later period.

In light of German Idealism, religion underwent many dangerous changes. On the one hand it became metaphysics, i.e. learned theological or philosophical theorizing on certain ultimate things; on the other hand it became transmuted into moralistic and utilitarian precepts. "Religion itself was suspect, it was termed 'enthusiasm' and 'fanaticism'."<sup>23</sup>

Schleiermacher was certainly part of this age and made significant contributions. It is not surprising therefore to see why his work is saturated with the thought of consciousness of one kind or another. Even though affinities can be drawn between him and Schelling's philosophy

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<sup>23</sup>Rudolf Otto, *Religious Essays* (London: Oxford University Press, 1931), p. 71.

of nature, where nature is correlated with human consciousness, Schleiermacher is nonetheless unique in his basic goals and affirmations. For example, it is probably true that he does not confuse the religious with the aesthetic consciousness as was the Romantic tendency.<sup>24</sup>

Nor is it surprising to detect musing of Kantian categories. Schleiermacher has been viewed as one who modified the Kantian philosophy by trying to maintain a relationship between the realistic and the idealistic elements contained in it.<sup>25</sup> This is also seen in the doctrine that the affection of the sense is a condition of knowledge. This is in agreement with the whole of Schleiermacher's doctrine since . . .

with him space, time, and causality are not merely forms of a phenomenal world existing solely in the consciousness of the percipient Subject, but are also forms of the objective, real world which confronts him and conditions his knowledge.<sup>26</sup>

Schleiermacher detects with Kant an element of spontaneity which is part of mankind's receptivity, that is, the a priori element of knowledge which cooperates with the empirical factor, as it is revealed in thought. This is evident in his conception of the *Universum*.<sup>27</sup>

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<sup>24</sup>Frederick C. Copleston, *A History of Philosophy* (Paramus, NJ: Newman Press, 1950), VII, 152.

<sup>25</sup>Friedrich Ueberweg, *History of Philosophy* (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1892), II, 244.

<sup>26</sup>Ibid.

<sup>27</sup>Otto's description of *Universum* is very helpful. "Our relation to this *universum*, he continues, is manifold. Firstly it is theoretic; we are enabled to penetrate and subdue the universe with our thought, to understand it in terms of cause and effect, according to

The plurality of co-existing objects and of successive processes in nature and mind constitute a unity which is not invented by the mind, but has true reality, and includes object and subject. As being a real unity, the world of manifold existence constitutes an articulate whole. The totality of all existing things is the world; the unity of the universe is the Deity. Whatever affirmations are made with reference to the Deity must be either negative or figurative and anthropomorphic. A reciprocity of influences exerted and received unites all the parts of the universe. Every part, therefore, is both active and passive.<sup>28</sup>

This theory of cognition revealed in dialectic enables Schleiermacher to avoid the a priori limitedness of the Hegelian dialectic. Ueberweg contends that while he in point of ideal content, systematic division, and terminology did not develop a thoroughly finished and all-including whole he frees himself from narrowness characteristic of Hegelian and other such systems. This is also true in regards to his substitution of individuality of duty for Kant's universality of duty. In this way

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intelligible laws. Such is the function of science; and when we would discover the highest laws, and the first principles of the *universum* it is the function of the science of metaphysics. Secondly our relation to *universum* is 'practical'. We are enabled to influence it in its course through our moral and cultural, our individual and communal work, to make it an expression of our will and our aims. Thus in the second place it becomes the object of our will, through our action upon it, and formative material for our ideals. These two relationships had both been understood and appreciated, but the previous age had failed, in Schleiermacher's opinion, to realize that they did not exhaust man's relationship to the universe, and that what was more valuable and more profound had not yet been said. There is a third relationship to the world: this is not science of the world, neither is it action upon the world; it is *experience* of this world in its profundity, the realization of its eternal content by the feeling of a contemplative and devout mind. This is not science or metaphysics; nor is it ethics or individual effort and directive activity. It is *religion*: the immediate appraisal of the universe as the one and the whole, transcending the mere parts which science may grasp, and at the same time the profound spiritual experience of its underlying ideal essence." Otto, *Religious Essays*, p. 74-75.

<sup>28</sup>Ueberweg, p. 244.

he is more capable than any other post-Kantian philosophy of a pure development, by which the various defects of other systems may be antidoted.

Schleiermacher was engaged in the significant thought of his day and always added to the discussion in a valuable way. One of his most important accomplishments was his undermining of the theory on which the Hegelian dialectic was built. By his conception of the relation between religion and philosophy he disputes "that pure thought, separated from all other thought, can make a beginning of its own, can originate as a primitive, independent, and particular form of thought."<sup>29</sup>

In the final analysis, Schleiermacher's thought directed toward a suggestive monopolarity, serves as a challenge and product of his time. It is in this context, that he is seen as a thinker who rediscovered religion. By his 'conatus toward a final unity', he transcends the perils of German Idealistic thought.

By this introduction to both Schleiermacher's age and thought, it is now more possible to engage in an exposition of what he meant by the religious life.

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<sup>29</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 252.

## Chapter 4

## RELIGION AND THE COMMON LIFE

I, for my part, am a stranger to the life and thought of this present generation. I am a prophet-citizen of a later world, drawn thither by a vital imagination and strong faith; to it belong my every word and deed.<sup>1</sup>

Friedrich Schleiermacher comes forth as a prophet<sup>2</sup> on the scene of eighteenth century thought. He spoke to the educated and prominent of his time,<sup>3</sup> accusing them of making religion just a word, and ignoring the real essence of its content. He wrote a book which has challenged his age, and served as a theological and sociological impetus to the ages which followed. All that follows in his writings is maturation,

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<sup>1</sup>Friedrich Schleiermacher, *Soliloquies* (Chicago: Open Court, 1926), p. 62.

<sup>2</sup>It is interesting and important to understand that for Schleiermacher, he is speaking to his peers and human brothers, not because he is by profession a minister but because he is a man. It was "the pure necessity" of his nature, which is a divine call, that caused him to cry out. Friedrich Schleiermacher, *On Religion* (New York: Harper & Row, 1955), p. 3.

In similarity to the prophetic image, Schleiermacher in his revision and notes writes, "Though I had been several years in the ministry when this was written, I stood very much alone among my professional brethren, and my acquaintance with them was small. . . . Longer experience, however, and friendly relations have only confirmed the judgment, that any deeper insight into the nature of religion generally, or any genuinely historical, real way of regarding the present state of religion is much too rare among the members of our clerical order." Ibid., p. 22. This is a response to anyone who stands strong for truth, as well as those who initiate innovations in a conservative atmosphere.

<sup>3</sup>Because of the view of religion as the whole of life, followers of Schleiermacher saw him as the father not only of modern theology but also "one of the great fathers of modern education, politics, aesthetics, and ethics as well." See Christian Lümann, *Schleiermacher: der Kirchenvater des 19. Jahrhunderts* (Tübingen: Mohr, 1907) In this comprehensive sense Schleiermacher's concept of religion was one of the foundations of the age. James Graby, "Reflections on the History of the Interpretation of Schleiermacher," *Scottish Journal of Theology*, XXI (Spring 1968), 286n.

clarification, and development of his original thesis, which is set forth in his pristine achievement *On Religion: Speeches to Its Cultured Despisers*.<sup>4</sup>

Schleiermacher makes intelligible to his readers the fact that their cultivated living is far from what true religion consists of. He further charges them with allowing suavity and sociability, art and science to fully have taken over in place of holy things or concerns. He taunts them with being overly involved in "the whole corporeal world," so as to neglect the self-understanding that is seen in piety (*Frommigkeit*).

#### *Tension Between The Poles*

All humanity, for Schleiermacher, seems to be in a tension between dual essential categories. On the one side the human soul seeks its individuality, "it strives to establish itself as an individual,"<sup>5</sup> on the other side there is the fear of standing alone in the face of a larger reality, and the desire to submit and share in the Whole (*Ganze*). Schleiermacher from his earliest thought seeks to use as a point of departure, a basic understanding of humanity which is philosophical. It is from his interpretation of the place of man in this world, that all his thought revolves around. In speaking of the *Ganze*, Schleiermacher

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<sup>4</sup>It has been postulated, that the difference between the earlier and later works, is that the former were meant to be active, to move men to create religion, whereas the latter were meant to interpret; thus theoretical. Schleiermacher, *Soliloquies*, p. lviii.

<sup>5</sup>Schleiermacher, *On Religion*, p. 4.

seems to mean the natural world around an individual: nature, persons, society, and manner of life. The complete thrust or flow of human life and thought which is caught in history. Man must allow himself to be 'taken hold of and determined' by that *Ganze*, of which God is an integral part. Most people however, never get beyond the self-regarding concerns, never advance further than consciousness (*Bewusstsein*)<sup>6</sup> of the individual.<sup>7</sup> Because of such action of *concupiscentia* people destroy the possibilities of the religious life. It is this that Schleiermacher believed the people of his time were guilty of, and he does not hesitate to include himself. Profligacy has led them to 'busy themselves with the rudiments in the outer courts', when they 'could crowd together into the Holy of Holies'.

Heart religion (*fromme*) is to be desired over the knowledge of dogmas and doctrines. *Fromme* is of such a sort that one who speaks of

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<sup>6</sup>Richard Brandt, *The Philosophy of Schleiermacher* (New York: Harper & Row, 1941), p. 291-92. ". . . sometimes to refer to a non-cognitive 'feeling' . . . and sometimes to refer to an act analogous to belief, that is to refer to a consciousness of something, such as the consciousness of being a finite object conditioned by God. This equivocation appears to go far to lighten his task of explaining how doctrines can be the expression of feeling. For doctrines can be the expression of 'consciousness' when he is using the word in its intentional sense, and they can also be said to be an expression of feeling. . . . , for the word is also used in a non-intentional sense. The plausibility of his argument seems to depend upon his shifting back and forth from one sense to another," as quoted in Van A. Harvey, "A Word in Defense of Schleiermacher," *Journal of Religion* XLII (July 1962), 157, who goes on to explain why the criticism is not a serious one.

<sup>7</sup>There is much emphasis in the writings of Schleiermacher on the individual, and more in *Reden* and *Soliloquies* than in his later *magnum opus*, *The Christian Faith*. This is probably due to his early Romantic influence and surroundings, where the individual was accentuated. Perhaps Schleiermacher was attempting to be true to the Hegelian dialectic, while taking advantage of both Kantian and Spinozistic metaphysics of freedom and determinism. H. L. Friess, in Schleiermacher, *Soliloquies*, p. xxxii-xxxiii.

it must have had it first, for in order to speak of it one must have an intercourse or actual relation with the source from which it is derived. The word itself denotes not a common content between what is designated religion, and what religion is in fact. This is the main thrust of Schleiermacher's message in *Reden*, the real existence of religious yearnings in an individual has come about via realization and contemplation of one's self in history, which is God's working, and by this enters into encounter with God and man.

God has sent interpreters and workers into the world in order to show other men this way of higher reality and deeper living than the one they are presently related to. "By their very existence they prove themselves ambassadors of God, and mediators between limited man and infinite humanity."<sup>8</sup> Schleiermacher envisaged his life in this light, as speaking from human existence to other forms as they are related to the *Ganze*. This action is an integral part of, or expression of, the *Naturzusammenhang* (system of nature), it is part of his nature which determines his position in the world. It is with this in view that Schleiermacher seeks to define all outer and inner implications of religion, as it speaks or relates to persons:

I do not seek to arouse single feelings possibly belonging to it, nor to justify and defend single conceptions, but I would conduct you into the profoundest depths whence every feeling and conception receives its form. I would show you from what human tendency religion proceeds and how it belongs to what is for you highest and dearest. To the roof of the temple I would lead you that you might survey the whole sanctuary and discover its inmost secrets.<sup>9</sup>

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<sup>8</sup> Schleiermacher, *On Religion*, p. 6.

<sup>9</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 11, 12.

People must be led away from dogmatic conceptions to the quintessence of the nature of *fromme*:

Why do you not regard the religious life itself, and first those pious exaltations of the mind in which all other known activities are set aside or almost suppressed, and the whole soul is dissolved in the immediate feeling of the Infinite and Eternal?<sup>10</sup>

The term 'immediate' (*augenblicklich*) denoting a moment of consciousness in which subject and object are not in opposition to one another, and 'feeling' (*Gefühl*) not a mere subjective emotion, but a moment where the self is passively aware of God as a trans-subjective reality.<sup>11</sup> The reaffirmation of *augenblicklich Gefühl*, addresses an inner rather than external experience, thus a 'secret contemplation'. Religion is essentially contemplative, and the *homo religiosus* is one who is open for the life of the world. This openness on the part of the pious individual is not in regards to the existence of a finite thing, combined with and opposed to another finite thing. Here Schleiermacher probably means the corporeal contemplating only, and developing an anthesis which is the temporal's road to the eternal.

Religion is to seek or does seek this eternal aspect in the whole of nature and in all that lives and possesses movement, and that is part of the being of existence. The seat of religion is not knowledge or morals, but *Gefühl*, it is not knowledge and science, either of

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<sup>10</sup>Ibid., pp. 15, 16.

<sup>11</sup>See Louis Dupre, "Towards a Revaluation of Schleiermacher's Philosophy of Religion," *Journal of Religion*, XLIV (April 1964), 112n. 37; and James B. Torrance, "Schleiermacher's Theology: Some Questions," *Scottish Journal of Theology*, XXI (Spring 1968), 279.

the world or of God.<sup>12</sup> In this context *Frommigkeit* takes its place alongside of science and morality (*Sitte*) or practice as a necessary and indispensable third and definitely not subordinate. One cannot subsist without the other. A pious person, one who has discovered *fromme*, will be both moral and scientific. It is interesting to note the necessity of unity in the thought of Schleiermacher, everything must interconnect in some way, e.g. God/man, science/theology, sin/grace. This coinherence of polarities may be due to the influence of German Idealism or perhaps the only course to take in order to remain clear of one extreme or another (especially to fight the system of Kant, where religion is absorbed into morality).

Real living occurs for persons when they realize the interdependency of the three, "his nature is reality which knows reality and where it encounters nothing it does not suppose it sees something . . . because you do not deal with life in a living way, your conception bears the stamp of perishableness, and is altogether meagre."<sup>13</sup> It is

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<sup>12</sup> Barth recognizes the attempt on the part of Schleiermacher not to give theology or the principles of Christianity a speculative basis. Karl Barth, *Protestant Theology in the Nineteenth Century* (Valley Forge: Judson Press, 1973), p. 447. ". . . That Barth does not explore the significance of this lack of interest in the truth of theological statements is a flaw in his essay. A thorough discussion of what stands behind his preoccupation with clarity and meaning rather than truth in theological language would have been helpful and it would also have sharpened the issue between the two theologians." Jack Forstman, "Barth, Schleiermacher, and the Christian Faith," *Union Seminary Quarterly Review*, XXI (March 1966), 312.

This is a good point, however for Barth no matter what the reason Schleiermacher pursues a study of religion rather than theology in the true sense.

<sup>13</sup> Schleiermacher, *On Religion*, p. 38, 39.

substantial science that is complete vision; it is practice that is culture and art self-produced; it is substantial religion that is 'sense and taste for the Infinite'. Sense is used to denote the capacity of sensibility, and sense for the Infinite and the immediate life of the finite in us as it is in the Infinite, are one and the same. The connection here of *sinnliche* reveals that contemplation is to be understood not as speculation proper, but as all 'movement of the spirit withdrawn from outward activity'.

Schleiermacher has been accused of pantheism at this point, but denies that the import of his thought suggests such a position.<sup>14</sup> Rather he questions whether the world can be conceived as true whole without God. He does not think God can only be placed in such a relation as 'cause'.<sup>15</sup>

In the *Reden*, Schleiermacher is always explaining to those who are his contemporaries the nature of the religious experience. In order for humanity to be pious, they must be one with the eternal in the unity of intuition (*Anschauung*) and *Gefühl*, which is *augenblicklich*, by this he remains in the unity of consciousness which is derived. The person with religion knows how to listen to self before their own

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<sup>14</sup>Niebuhr marks an affinity between Schleiermacher and Charles Hartshorne's Panentheism. Richard R. Niebuhr, "Schleiermacher and the Names of God," *Journal for Theology and the Church*, VII (1970), 203f.

<sup>15</sup>"Both are transcendent; the world transcends all actual thought as a *terminus ad quem* toward which the process of discovery approaches; God transcends thought absolutely as *terminus a quo*, in which thinking is grounded, but which it cannot approach. At the same time, God and the world are in a sense immanent, i.e. they are represented in human experience. . . ." Schleiermacher, *Soliloquies*, p. 137.

consciousness, and is able to reconstruct from consciousness their own state. It is incumbent for a religious person to return to the once felt state, it is in returning that true existence is found and the knowledge of one's place in the *Ganze*. The person is in the Whole by sense experience, and are themselves by the unity of self-consciousness (*Selbstbewusstsein*)<sup>16</sup> "which is given chiefly in the possibility of comparing the varying degrees of sensation." The person becomes sense and the Whole becomes object, there is an intercourse and uniting between the two, after which each returns to its former place.<sup>17</sup> The object rended from sense is a perception, and man rended from object is himself a *Gefühl*. It is this that is experienced and yet never experienced:

The phenomenon of your life is just the result of its constant departure and return. It is scarcely in time at all, so swiftly it passes, it can scarcely be described, so little does it properly exist. Would that I could hold it fast and refer to it your commonest as well as your highest activities.<sup>18</sup>

This experience is the first contact of the universal life with an individual, it is a conjunction of the Universe with the *en-sarkos* Reason

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<sup>16</sup> Schleiermacher outlines three levels of self-consciousness; animal state (*tierartig*) where there is no distinction between subject and object, sensibly determined state (*sinnlich*), distinction between subject and object, and religious state (*schlechthiniges* or *allgemeines Abhangigkeitsgefühl*). See Friedrich Schleiermacher, *The Christian Faith* (New York: Harper & Row, 1963), para. 5, p. 18-26.

<sup>17</sup> "This theory, that is self-consciousness thought and its object are in immediate rapport, Schleiermacher shared with many of his contemporaries, notably Fichte and Schopenhauer. Unlike these two idealists, however, he does not base an idealist metaphysics on this theory, i.e. he does not infer that in self-consciousness we discover what it means to be." Schleiermacher, *Soliloquies*, p. 136.

<sup>18</sup> Schleiermacher, *On Religion*, p. 43.

for a primordial, prolific entwining:

You lie directly on the bosom of the infinite world. In that moment you are its soul. Through one part of your nature you feel, as your own, all its powers and its endless life. In that moment it is your body, you pervade, as your own, its muscles, and members and your thinking and forecasting set its inmost nerves in motion. In this every living, original movement in your life is first received. Among the rest it is the source of every religious emotion. But it is not, as I said, even a moment.<sup>19</sup>

When consciousness is reached this immediate union halts, then real existence blossoms. Consciousness consists of both intuition and feeling, one or the other will dominate, but unless the individual surrenders to the distinction they exist as one, and the consciousness of unity of life remains. The life of man expands and has its place in time as knowledge, which involves both *Anschauung* and *Gefühl* which interact with activity. Both knowledge and activity are a desire to be identified with the Universe, through an object. This is where one really shares in Being, as he relates to the *Ganze* and remains himself, yet is always returning to the original form from which he came. Meaningful living seems to be in this constant interaction of individual and community. A realization of one's self in the flow of humanity, an historical person in an historical situation<sup>20</sup> (the now in contrast to

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<sup>19</sup> Ibid., pp. 43f.

<sup>20</sup> Those who do not think become thinkers "by the reflection that the present is ever slipping into the past as speedily as it emerges out of the future. . . . It is this higher order of self-contemplation, and this alone that makes me capable of meeting the sublime summons that man lives not only as a mortal in the realm of time, but also as immortal in the domain of eternity, that his life be not only earthly but also divine." Schleiermacher, *Soliloquies*, pp. 13, 22.

It appears that Heidegger has further developed this postulation, see especially, Martin Heidegger, *Discourse On Thinking* (New York: Harper & Row, 1966).

the past, a living in the now contrastive to the present as it is rooted and cognated to the past), and involving one's self in the life around him, his milieu. Schleiermacher is delineating *Sitz im Leben*, not a mythical or psychological experience, but accentuating the inherent relational quality to religious experience. This is an important understanding for a modern mind and for the Theology of Engagement.

*Religion As Feeling*

Schleiermacher described life as an "alternation between an *Insichbleiben* (abiding-in-self) and an *Aussichheraustreten* (passing-beyond-self) on part of the subject . . . the two forms of consciousness (knowing and feeling) constitute the abiding-in-self, while doing proper is the passing-beyond-self."<sup>21</sup> Any works or givings of persons are merely giving back what has already been imparted to them, by the original act of fellowship which has been wrought in them. The pious person is one who *feels*, as a result of the operation of God in him or her by means of the operation of the world upon them. As one interacts with the world, the world affects their existence or Being, there is a giving and receiving simultaneously.

All true human feelings belong to the religious spheres, but all ideas and principles of every sort are alien to it.<sup>22</sup> The *Gefühl*

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<sup>21</sup>Schleiermacher, *Christian Faith*, para. 8.

<sup>22</sup>Otto notes that Schleiermacher makes only a quantitative difference in the 'feeling of absolute dependency' and other kindred feelings. Thus a difference of degree and not intrinsic quality. Rudolf Otto, *The Idea of the Holy* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1958), p. 9.

may dwell in many solid and strong, without ever going through the process of contemplation.<sup>23</sup> Thus the contention of original human perfection, i.e. man's nature the seat of *Frommigkeit* and *fromme*. In the consciousness of religious emotions, a man is aware of the operation of things upon him, the world and nature writing upon the tablet of his soul. The 'feeling of an absolute dependence' is occasioned by the action of single things upon him.<sup>24</sup> True religion is the feeling that in its highest concord all that moves in us in *Gefühl* is one, and that our Being and living is a living and Being in and through God.

Schleiermacher collates religion to music; "it is one great whole, yet the music of each person is a whole by itself, which again is divided into different characteristic forms, till we come to the genius and style of the individual."<sup>25</sup> Religion has endless variety

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<sup>23</sup>"Feeling is not ethical subjectivity, cognitive-theoretical subjectivity, or emotional subjectivity. It is subjectivity as such, consciousness itself, the common generic element present in all the more determinate and specific forms. Feeling, or consciousness as such, is the organ of receptivity, or man's openness to and immediate union with being. Consequently, feeling is not merely one aspect of human existence among others, rather feeling (=consciousness) is global human existence as a psychophysical totality in its lived union with and interaction with the world." R. Williams, "Schleiermacher and Feuerbach on the Intentionality of Religious Consciousness," *Journal of Religion*, LIII (1973), 431.

<sup>24</sup>It is possibly more meaningful to translate *schlechthinnige Abhangigkeitsgefühle* as the feeling of simple dependence. Schleiermacher understood *schlechthinnig* to mean absolute, i.e. free, unrestricted, describing the quality of dependence. However in modern times 'absolute' has acquired Hegelian and post-Hegelian connotations, therefore 'simple' or 'sheer' will be employed below. See Niebuhr, p. 183, 4 n., and Jack C. Verheyden, "Introduction," in Friedrich Schleiermacher, *The Life of Jesus* (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1975), p. xl, for the use of 'unqualified'.

<sup>25</sup>Schleiermacher, *On Religion*, p. 51.

even down to the single personality, yet there is a common sharing in the *Ganze*. Thousands may be moved religiously in the same way, yet outward manifestations be heterogeneous. A religion is not universally true in the sense that everything that exists or has existed outside of it is not to be called *fromme* at all. Rather a religion is true when a real God-consciousness is prevalent and acknowledged. There is a rejection of the universality of any one religion, but Christianity will be able to extend itself over the whole human race, though perhaps among many races, "this greatest of all religions" will undergo many important changes. What those changes must be he does not elaborate on but affirms that religion does not seek to bring all those who believe to one belief or feeling. The pious person understands and perceives that this *fromme* is only part of the *Ganze*, that concerning the same circumstances there may be varying beliefs and contentions quite different from his own, yet are no less to be termed *Frommigkeit*. Those who would be called the pious come to the realization that there are conceptions and feelings which are a fraction of the religious realm that are far from his *sinnlich* and grasp:

There is in religion such capacity for unlimited manysidedness in judgment and in contemplation as nowhere else to be found. . . . Religion is the natural and sworn foe of all narrowmindedness, and of all onesidedness.<sup>26</sup>

Religion depends on itself, its fact is immediacy, and not proved from everything else, all apparent connection and detail is given a subordinate place. That which is *augenblicklich*, is what has not passed

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<sup>26</sup>Ibid., p. 56.

through the stages of idea,<sup>27</sup> therefore religion is to be comprehended under the sum total of all forms.

The person that finds or discovers *fromme* has a *Gefühl* of being one with nature, in such a way that he or she learns to accept all that comes in life and death. In all that constitutes life, the pious evolve the ability to stand vis-a-vis the realities, and still be possessed of peace and tranquility of mind and soul. In this context those sensitive to religious life await all that might befall them, as merely the working out of those eternal laws that lay hold of all things. The pious grow to the place of the disclosure of humanity, in and through love, by this they receive the life of the World-Spirit. Nothing is to be viewed alone and in itself as separate, but only as it is related to the uniform transition of creation. The pious elicit meaning as they partake of the *Ganze* as a distinct part, and relates to others perceiving all human history as one complete whole: "The true Nature of Religion is immediate consciousness of the Deity as He is found in ourselves and in the world."<sup>28</sup>

By an explication of religion and the common life, it is quite easy to see how a Theology of Engagement with one's surroundings has its origin in Schleiermacher's Christian Weltanschauung. It also raises some very difficult problems which must be addressed. One such problem is with the close relation of God and the World.

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<sup>27</sup> Ibid., p. 101.

<sup>28</sup> Ibid.

## Chapter 5

## THEISM OR PANTHEISM?

## SCHLEIERMACHER'S RELATIONSHIP TO SPINOZA

Against those who see us as being forced to choose God or the world, I am affirming that we must choose God and the world. To choose one against the other is in the end to reject both. Today there is a pervasive belief that the affirmation of the world and wholehearted involvement in it is the Christian calling.<sup>1</sup>

It is without doubt true, that with the desire to make God immanent, Schleiermacher has raised some very basic and difficult questions. This move to structure nature, God, and man as a certain unifying reality has left to question the freedom of man and the objectification of God. Some has contended that the Schleiermacherian God if not the God of pantheism is definitely not the creator God.<sup>2</sup> Does Schleiermacher totally deny the transcendent God, or is this rather an unfulfilled possibility?<sup>3</sup> Is he a pantheist?

Schleiermacher failed in his entire life to rid himself of the accusation of merging God and the World in such a way as to annihilate the personality and freedom of the former.

Benedictus de Spinoza, is recognized in the history of western philosophy as a pantheist *par excellence*.<sup>4</sup> He has been chosen as a

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<sup>1</sup>John B. Cobb, Jr., *God and the World* (Philadelphia: Westminster Press, 1969), p. 9.

<sup>2</sup>Kenneth Hamilton, "Schleiermacher and Relational Theology," *Journal of Religion*, XLIV (January 1964), 34.

<sup>3</sup>Van A. Harvey, "A Word in Defense of Schleiermacher's Theological Method," *Journal of Religion*, XLII (Junly 1962), 153, 166.

<sup>4</sup>Prior to the publication of *Reden*, Schleiermacher's initial

model of this kind of thought, and we will contrast his basic formulations with that of Schleiermacher. Since there is difficulty with the meaning of pantheism, this adoption of Spinoza for comparative purposes provides a context for its discussion. However, it is important to understand the affinities and difference in Schleiermacher's approach with that of Spinoza, who is nearly always referred to when speaking of pantheistic thought.

First, there is the point of departure of Spinoza as a rationalistic metaphysician. This point is radically asserted by the Spinozic contention that mathematics is the best example of certain knowledge. His quest for certainty led him to the use of logical demonstration. It was his assumption, like that of Descartes, that insight into the objectivity of the real world could be ascertained by way of mathematical knowledge. Thus the use of the geometrical method as a means of defining and demonstrating the intelligible nature of reality.

With the belief that reality must consist in entities connected by the kind of relation cognized in geometry, it is not difficult to understand how Spinoza came to the conclusion that reality is one, eternal, and necessary. He developed a conception of God in light of the concept of substance. Substance is viewed in a different manner than previously realized in western philosophy, i.e. he defined it as

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introduction into the theological world, the pantheism controversy (*Pantheismusstreit*) had come to public attention. This controversy led to a more objective analysis of Spinozic formulations of the God-world relationship, and destroyed the image of Spinoza as the "satanic atheist." Kurt Weinberg, "Pantheismusstreit," in *The Encyclopedia of Philosophy* (New York: Macmillan, 1967), VI, 35.

"that which is in itself, and is conceived through itself; in other words, that of which a conception can be formed independently of any other conception."<sup>5</sup>

Substance is distinguished from attributes, which is "that which the intellect perceives as constituting the essence of substance; and from modes, which is defined as "the modifications or affectiones of substance, or that which exists in and is conceived through something other than itself."<sup>6</sup> Spinoza believed that there could be only one substance, "there cannot exist in the universe two or more substances having the same nature or attribute."<sup>7</sup> And that no one substance can be produced by another substance, i.e. one substance cannot be the cause of another substance.<sup>8</sup> Substance, then, explained in this manner is equivalent to God or Nature.

This reveals an adherence to one universal order in relation to which all things must be understood. It is understandable then, that Spinoza identifies God with substance and affirms that "God, or substance, consisting of infinite attributes, of which each expresses eternal and infinite essentiality, necessarily exists."<sup>9</sup> From these formulations, Spinoza proceeds to the position of an ultimate which is truly self-contained.

One of the problems faced with beginning with substance or the objective world, is that the creator God of classical theism is in some

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<sup>5</sup> Benedict de Spinoza, *Ethics* (New York: Tudor), Def. III.

<sup>6</sup> Ibid., Def. IV, V.

<sup>7</sup> Ibid., Def. V.

<sup>8</sup> Ibid., Def. VI.

<sup>9</sup> Ibid., Def. XI.

way denied. Substance is here understood as existing by necessity or self caused (*causa sui*). The notion of a free causation by God, and the notion of human freedom is denied. This reveals negative elements concerning the definition of God in the philosophy of Spinoza. It may be true, however, that the real intent of his argument is not negative, "but is designed to establish something important about the nature of reality."<sup>10</sup>

Spinoza rejects the Judeo-Christian tradition of the ultimate in God as a figment of the imagination.<sup>11</sup> He affirms a rational and necessary order from which all things necessarily follows. God then becomes the only substance, "whatever is, is in God, and without God nothing can be, or be conceived."<sup>12</sup> Even though Schleiermacher was a theologian doing theology with a definite philosophical framework and flair in mind, when it came to the doctrines of the Christian Faith, it was his concern to move beyond any human speculation as a basis for knowledge about God.<sup>13</sup> This is clearly seen in his emphasis upon 'feeling'. This approach avoids both doctrinal and metaphysical definitions as adequate descriptions of the encounter between God and the World. Schleiermacher does not fall into the trap that Spinoza did, of confusing rationalistic speculation to gain objective truth and historical existence as avenue for discovering the same.<sup>14</sup> But he shares with

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<sup>10</sup>Henry E. Allison, *Benedict de Spinoza* (Boston: Twayne, 1975), p. 66.

<sup>11</sup>Ibid., p. 67f.

<sup>12</sup>Spinoza, Prop. XV.

<sup>13</sup>William Johnson, *On Religion* (Leiden: Brill, 1964), p. x.

<sup>14</sup>Friedrich Schleiermacher, *The Christian Faith* (New York: Harper & Row, 1963), p. 194f.

Spinoza the rejection of the enlightenment idea of God, which was deistic.<sup>15</sup> He does not however, accept the idea that God and nature are identical or one an extension of the other. Schleiermacher like Spinoza, saw the danger of description about God which caused him to be envisaged as divorced from that which he created. He came to see in Spinoza a way of thinking that orthodox theology had neglected to develop.

Schleiermacher was more concerned with Spinoza's intention rather than with the strict implication of his *Ethics*, and more concerned with the relative adequacy or inadequacy of alternative construction of the God-World relation, than with the absolute satisfactoriness of Spinoza's formulations.<sup>16</sup>

He describes Absolute causality in such a way that it is to be "distinguished from the content of the natural order and thus contrasted with it, and, on the other [hand], equated with it in comprehension."<sup>17</sup> As a web of interrelationships (*Wirkungszusammenhangen*) is posited in the individual with the world, so with divine causality and the natural order. Schleiermacher speaks of an association of self-consciousness, where freedom and dependence share a dynamic correlation. This relation being extrapolated to the realm of divine activity, reveals a first causality which is in the sphere of reciprocal

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<sup>15</sup> Martin Redeker, *Schleiermacher: Life and Thought* (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1973), p. 44.

<sup>16</sup> Richard R. Niebuhr, "Schleiermacher and the Names of God," *Journal for Theology and the Church*, VII (1970), 198.

<sup>17</sup> Schleiermacher, *The Christian Faith*, para. 51.

action with the mutual varying distribution of causality and passivity which constitutes the natural order. This is why Schleiermacher can assert, "the divine causality is posited as equal in compass to finite causality."<sup>18</sup> The finite interaction of causality and passivity, and the contrastion of these points, infer that divine causality is contrasted with the finite.

It sounds as if Schleiermacher is speaking as a naturalist. God and the World are correlates or polarities e.g. left and right. In this way he abandons the notion of the Living God of orthodox Christian thought for the divine Being as unqualified unity, but does not identify God with the objective natural world as does Spinoza.

In the thinking of Spinoza, the biblical perspective of creation *ex nihilo* is lost, and with it the distance between God and the World. Also the otherness of God that is the very otherness that explains the presence of evil in the world as exempt from divine causality and will. Schleiermacher does struggle here, but clearly exceeds the position of equating creation and God as the sum total of finite being. He does not assert the natural identity of divine 'action' with the realm of natural causation, and this has been identified with the philosophy of identity.<sup>19</sup>

By rejecting the transcendent understanding of God. Schleiermacher was adducing the necessity for an objectivity which stresses the importance of subjects, and surpasses the subject-object relation. It

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<sup>18</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 201.

<sup>19</sup> H. R. Mackintosh, *Types of Modern Theology* (London: Nisbet, 1947), p. 81.

does not appear to be his concern in his theological package to extract the objective reality of God. But rather he posits religious experience as the norm for any talk about God; and even then he is known not in himself but as he is perceived and given for the *Sinn von Sein*.

With Spinoza, Schleiermacher denies that conceptual thought can grasp and identify God, but in contrast denies the reduction of God to the World. It is important to note, that Schleiermacher exceeds Spinozic formulations by asserting conceptual thought could correct this fault by comprehending the World and God as correlates. Thereby he escapes the separation of God and the World and complete identification of God and the World. This stresses on the part of humanity an inability to conceptualize such a relationship, but by its very nature humanity lives in the reality of its Being.

The second difference is seen in the loss of individual freedom in Spinoza's system of God as substance, concerned though he was with the sense of a dependence upon the infinite whole of things.

For Schleiermacher the proposition holds good *principium individuationis est materia* (matter is the principle that gives individuality), and he constantly repeats the assertion that, even in the case of spirit, individuality arises only through the universal spirits entering on material existence and, so to speak, breaking itself up therein.<sup>20</sup>

His main dispute with Spinoza was that he allowed for no significant individual existence. With the emphasis upon freedom (especially *Soliloquies*), Schleiermacher fought both Kantian moralistic categories and Spinoza's misanthropic elements. This preoccupation

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<sup>20</sup>Emil Brunner, *The Philosophy of Religion* (London: Clarke, 1958), p. 119.

with freedom became important for Schleiermacher in his fight for religious freedom in Prussia.

In an unpublished essay entitled *Spinozismus*, he makes a distinction between substantiality and individuality, and raised the question as to the ultimate ground of individuality.<sup>21</sup>

Schleiermacher apparently fails to grant God as rich a representation as he does his creation. By stressing an inability to conceptualize God, the personality of God is denied. It would seem that God cannot be objectified (except possibly in Christ),<sup>22</sup> then personality cannot be ascribed to God, except in a symbolic sense.<sup>23</sup> Schleiermacher rejects the personalism of God and with it the Leibnitzian representation of God as an object among many<sup>24</sup> and thereby affirms the impassivity of God.<sup>25</sup> In comparison, as was presented in the preceding discussion of 'the religious life', he envisaged individual personality as of great importance to the unity of God and the World. This will be in direct opposition to the Spinozic description of substance as containing a single infinitely complex quality, i.e. "a super

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<sup>21</sup> H. L. Friess, "Appendix," in Friedrich Schleiermacher, *Soliloquies* (Chicago: Open Court, 1926), p. 123.

<sup>22</sup> David R. Griffin, *A Process Christology* (Philadelphia: Westminster Press, 1973)

<sup>23</sup> Frederick Copleston, *A History of Philosophy* (London: Burns & Oates, 1965), VII, 155. If there is to be any personality ascribed to God then it is that God is love; see Schleiermacher, *Christian Faith*, prop. 165 and 167.

<sup>24</sup> Niebuhr, p. 197.

<sup>25</sup> Carl E. Krieg, "Schleiermacher On the Divine Nature," *Religion in Life*, XLII, 4 (1973), 515.

particular embracing and also pervading all particulars, a *gestalt* quality of the whole of things."<sup>26</sup>

It is as if each individual possesses a portion of the universal within, and yet maintains a certain particularity (*Eigentümlichkeit*) and expression of God. "This is, in fact, Schleiermacher's presupposition, namely that all individuality is a manifestation of universal life and hence 'everyone carries a tiny bit of every one else within, so that divination is stimulated by comparison with oneself.'"<sup>27</sup> Each individual is unique and an expression of the essence of universal human existence, i.e. "an uninterrupted consciousness of humanity's entire essence."<sup>28</sup> This state, however, comes about by an openness and willingness for self-development. This self-development always eventually includes and yet transcends self, thus, ". . . it is only wilfulness that hides a person from himself [herself]."<sup>29</sup>

In contrast, Spinoza's individual surpasses individuality, when achieving a certain cognitive comprehension of the one universal order. Schleiermacher's thought accentuates a "type of experience in which there is a productive inner continuity between the individual and the universal,"<sup>30</sup> and any knowledge of the universal which is attained, is

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<sup>26</sup>Charles Hartshorne and William L. Reese, *Philosophers Speak of God* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1953), p. 195.

<sup>27</sup>Hans-Georg Gadamer, *Truth and Method* (New York: Seabury Press, 1975), p. 166f.

<sup>28</sup>Friedrich Schleiermacher, *Soliloquies* (Chicago: Open Court, 1926), p. 29.

<sup>29</sup>Ibid., p. 26.

<sup>30</sup>Ibid., p. 128; also see Friedrich Schleiermacher, *Reden*, pp. 45, 58, 228.

done so via *Gefühl* and intuition (*Anschauung*).

Schleiermacher departs from a pantheistic formulation of the relation between God and the World, and does not deviate from a basic theological understanding of individual freedom. It appears that what he was attempting was a rediscovery of religion that would have meaning for modern man (scientific world view) in a viable social context. He could no longer accept the traditional doctrines which were concerned more with the distance between God and the World, than with the dependence of the latter upon the former. Nor could he, with Spinoza, postulate a complete convergence between God and the World which could be constructed by philosophical demonstration. Neither position would do justice to his cognition of 'humanity created for community'.

Instead of a pantheist, Schleiermacher can be viewed as a theologian who could not accept man's responsibility for sociality and Christian ethicality as separate entities. This is especially seen in his engagement in the German world of the eighteenth century, which was plagued with political and social conflict.<sup>31</sup>

By understanding what Schleiermacher was pointing toward, one can perceive the importance of his basic conceptualization for Christian dialogue with the world. It is also vital to detect that what he constructs as the existential foundation for engagement was trans-subjective.

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<sup>31</sup>See esp. Robert M. Bigler, *The Politics of German Protestantism* (Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1972).

## Chapter 6

## SUBJECTIVE OBJECTIVITY

As regards the identification of absolute dependence with 'relation to God' in our proposition: this is to be understood in the sense that the *Whence* of our receptive and active existence, as implied in the self-consciousness, is to be designated by the word 'God', and that this is for us the really original signification of that word.<sup>1</sup>

There is no doubt that Schleiermacher speaks as a Platonist, steeped in Socratic reality, in which persons possess the truth as part of their nature from the beginning, and need only an occasion for this truth to emerge and reveal itself.<sup>2</sup> With this apprehension of truth as ontological and immanent, Schleiermacher tends to stand vis-a-vis the biblical account of how one attains religious knowledge and experience. This raises the question of the distance between God and the World, the creator/creature relationship, the Dominican school (Aquinas) in contrast to the Franciscan school (Augustine), with Schleiermacher as an heir of the former. John Ballie, regards Schleiermacher as a return, after a long reign of Aristotelianism, to the older Socratic standpoint.<sup>3</sup>

It was in the *Aufklärung* period or *seculum rationalisticum* (Age of Reason), and in the philosophy of Descartes that man again became the subject, e.g. 'cogito ergo sum'. Here it is humans and not

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<sup>1</sup>Friedrich Schleiermacher, *The Christian Faith* (New York: Harper & Row, 1963), p. 16.

<sup>2</sup>Vide Albert L. Blackwell, "Schleiermacher's Sermon at Nathanael's Grave," *Journal of Religion*, LVII, 1 (January 1977), 67f.

<sup>3</sup>John Ballie, *The Interpretation of Religion* (New York: Parthenon Press, 1928), p. 17.

God who become the pivotal figure, God tends to exist only in so far as people give him existence. Schleiermacher's thought was not so much a rejection of this position, as it was a transcending of it. He therefore had no desire to sacrifice intellect for an understanding of religious experience, but sought to do theology as a modern man in a modern age for the needs of a modern mind.<sup>4</sup> Kant as pre-thought for Schleiermacher asserted that man cannot know reality as it is, through pure reason, thus God cannot be known in himself. Schleiermacher gave Kant the benefit of the doubt, but believed people can know God via religious experience. He suggested another source of knowledge than the study of epistemology has couched, that is *Gefühl*, *Selbstbewusstsein*, *Gemutszustand* (determination of feeling, disposition). It can be argued that because of his emphasis upon the subjective over against the objective, that Schleiermacher is an heir of the Reformation. The contention being theological affirmations are not descriptions of God as he is in and for himself, but of God as he gives himself to faith.<sup>5</sup>

#### *Trans-Subjective Aspects of the Religious Life*

The criticism against Schleiermacher has often been that of asserting he allows for no objective category when expressing the nature of the religious life.<sup>6</sup> However, a closer look at his presentation

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<sup>4</sup>Jack Forstman, "Barth, Schleiermacher, and the Christian Faith," *Union Seminary Quarterly Review*, XXI (March 1966), 306-7.

<sup>5</sup>Van A. Harvey, "A Word in Defense of Schleiermacher," *Journal of Religion*, XLII (July 1962), 153.

<sup>6</sup>See especially Karl Barth, *Protestant Theology in the Nineteenth Century* (Valley Forge: Judson Press, 1973).

might lead to a different interpretation. The category of transcendence is within the structure of immanence or relatedness and is a basic feature of actuality.<sup>7</sup>

Schleiermacher has emphasized three main categories in the nature of the religious life of humanity in the redeemed state: 1) the individual, he wanted to allow for significant personal existence, self-reflection, and self-actualization, 2) the social, he emphasized the existence of a community inherent in the structure of the ideal state of humanity, and 3) the historical, the acknowledgement of the intervention of God in time, and the meaning of persons in a process, i.e. historical redemption.

It may be concluded that Schleiermacher received solely from the Romantic ethos the emphasis upon individuality. But Martin Redecker has reminded us that he had these thoughts prior to his encounter with Berlin Romanticism.<sup>8</sup> The attention given to the development of individual life seems to allow for religious freedom, where one is free to maintain uniqueness while living in and with the world. However it is an existential allotted freedom in that one is free only to find completeness in encounter with significant others. Individual freedom seems to be relevant only in regards to religious experience, i.e. humanity is free to have a personal awakening to a preordained state. As that takes place freedom begins to escape one's grasp. This is brought

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<sup>7</sup>Gerhard Spiegler, *The Eternal Covenant* (New York: Harper & Row, 1967), p. 191.

<sup>8</sup>Martin Redecker, *Schleiermacher: Life and Thought* (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1973), p. 33.

out in more detail in *The Christian Faith*.

There are essentially two elements in self-consciousness. The first is the expression of the subject for itself, and the second is the co-existence with an other. These two elements are in agreement in the subject and manifest themselves in receptivity and activity.

Now to these two elements, as they exist together in the temporal self-consciousness, correspond in the subject its *Receptivity* and its (spontaneous) *Activity*. If we could think away the co-existence with an other, but otherwise think ourselves as we are, then a self-consciousness which predominantly expressed an affective condition of receptivity would be impossible, and any self-consciousness could then express only activity-and activity, however, which, not being directed to any object, would be merely an urge outwards, an indefinite 'agility' without form or colour.<sup>9</sup>

Where receptivity subsists and is conscious of some outside reality, the '*Gefühl* of Dependence' abides. On the other hand where spontaneous movement and activity are expressed the '*Gefühl* of Freedom' abides. Without the feeling freedom, there could be no 'feeling of simple dependence'.

This is not merely a theology of encounter. Otherwise this would be a theology of culture, in which meaning is derived from experience in meeting. Instead Schleiermacher seems to move in the direction of an immanent-transcendent understanding of God. God is the ground of existence, and ordained *Wirkungszusammenhangen* (human relatedness) as a necessary portion of life and his redemptive activity which enlightens as to that pre-existent quality of life. God is the ground of encounter but one does not discover what it means to be in encounter, rather that comes about by way of religious experience. The subjectivism

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<sup>9</sup>Schleiermacher, para. 4, p. 13.

that Schleiermacher has been accused of can be seen as an insistence upon individual religious experience, which is presupposed by objective truth i.e. existential community. This, again, becomes the foundation for a Theology of Engagement.

The 'feeling of sheer dependence' does not occur in a single moment, because the moment is always determined by what is given, and by objects towards which we have a feeling of freedom. There is always the *Bewusstsein* of the other, including humanity and the 'Whence' of our *Gefühl* and freedom thus God.

Hence a feeling of absolute dependence, strictly speaking, cannot exist in a single moment as such, because such a moment is always determined, as regards its total content, by what is given, and thus by objects towards which we have a feeling of freedom. But the self-consciousness which accompanies all our activity, and therefore, since that is never zero, accompanies our whole existence, and negatives absolute freedom, is itself precisely a consciousness of absolute dependence; for it is the consciousness that the whole of our spontaneous activity comes from a source outside of us in just the same sense in which anything towards which we should have a feeling of absolute freedom must have proceeded entirely from ourselves. But without any feeling of freedom a feeling of absolute dependence would not be possible.<sup>10</sup>

This *Gefühl* that arises from self-consciousness and encounter, of being utterly dependent is the same as being in relation with God, thus God-consciousness. It is not created by the participation in community, but is presupposed by it. Schleiermacher works toward a synthesis of God, humankind, and the world but does not advocate any strict pantheism as mentioned above.

It seems the more willing a person is to reach beyond themselves, and for their particular religious community to reach beyond itself,

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<sup>10</sup>Ibid., para. 4, p. 16.

the proximity to authentic God-consciousness is enhanced. This is evident when Schleiermacher speaks of the degrees of consciousness and religious activity, i.e. Idol-worship, Polytheism, and Monotheism. Here persons extend themselves by extending their *Selbstbewusstsein*, when if allowed to function grows to the 'most perfect form of religion', Christianity. Schleiermacher contends that history supports the claim that there is not a serious reversion from Monotheism.<sup>11</sup> He ostensibly advocates a progressive move on the part of humanity to fulfill a determined destiny, i.e. community. If there exists a constant move in history toward Monotheism, and if Christianity is the most perfect of the highly developed forms of religious expression (Judaism, Islam), then one might conclude one day the world will be a Christian community, but not necessarily culminate there.

The second matter to be considered in regards to a main category of the religious, is the need for a 'fact given' prior to the rise and cultivation of God-consciousness. There are two significant elements of the origination of the 'religious community'. One being its outward unity, a historical fact that is responsible for the inception of a particular kind of religious consciousness. The second being its inward unity, that quality which is common to all religious systems of the same kind and level.

Each particular form of communal piety has both an outward unity, as a fixed fact of history with a definite commencement, and an inward unity, as a peculiar modification of that general character which is common to all developed faiths of the same kind and level;

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<sup>11</sup>Ibid., para. 8, p. 36.

and it is from both of these taken together that the peculiar essence of any particular form is to be discerned.<sup>12</sup>

The inward unity of any given religion is connected with the historical facts which brought that religion into being. Therefore the stronger and more generated the given fact of form, the more perfect the form of God-consciousness.

There is no doubt that Schleiermacher acknowledges a differentiation of religious consciousness. But two things are universal and absolute, the '*Gefühl* of unqualified dependence', and the desired result, community.<sup>13</sup>

The third matter to be considered in regards to a main category is the phenomenon of the spread and communication of Christianity as the ultimate method of historical redemption. The basis of social life for Schleiermacher is this ability for individuals whose God-consciousness has been awakened to reach out and influence others. The rule of the further development of this conscious state, is the

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<sup>12</sup>Ibid., para. 10, p. 44.

<sup>13</sup>The term community as utilized in this paper as the second main category in the thought of Schleiermacher, carries with it the meaning of common participation. There is a participating in the whole of historical reality, by man, stages and kinds of manking (culture), and God. These cannot be separated, but each maintain self-identity. God for Schleiermacher being the ground of this arrangement and not another face in the crowd. This means speaking of subject is speaking of object, which is the causality (*Ursächlichkeit*) of that subject and its relatedness to the object.

Even though there is diversity of religious expression, there is a homogeneity (*Zusammengehörigkeit*) of religious 'feeling'. Each community taking its place in a larger community in a process of world-actualization, of which Christ is the archetype (*Urbild*) in his God-consciousness. See Jack C. Verheyden, "Introduction," in Friedrich Schleiermacher, *Life of Jesus* (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1975), p. xlvi-lviii).

communication of it to the forming of religious communities, and an intercommunity influence. "With regard to the impulse to express the God-consciousness externally: there is, of course, no 'inner' which does not become also an 'outer', . . ."<sup>14</sup> Thus the world community is effected by an individual's religious experience which has come about surrounding a 'fact given', as that experience goes through the destined process of historical redemption.

*Fulness and Relation*

The most important aspect of Schleiermacher's system and impetus for engagement, seems to be that of community. When this system is applied to modern social problems it offers some very penetrating possibilities for the movement necessary to effect adequate change. The emphasis upon the I/Thou relationship necessary for religious experience, makes *fromme* a social experience. Certainly one of the problems today in most religious circles is the negation of this very reality. How does one's religious convictions allow for significant social interaction? How does God continue to enter into one's corporeal existence in a meaningful and dynamic way? For Schleiermacher God is always entering in by the impulse for the higher life. That life which is grounded in historical human experience and is shared with others by necessity of its nature.

The conclusion reached in light of the foregoing presentation,

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<sup>14</sup>Friedrich Schleiermacher, *On Religion*, (New York: Harper & Row, 1958), Fourth Speech and footnote 15, p. 196; Schleiermacher, *The Christian Faith*, para. 60, p. 246.

is that freedom here is equal to individual identification with the world process of redemption. This raises the question of the relationship between God and persons in the religious life. Is salvation monergistic or synergistic? How active is the human will to choose the religious life? And what force or power is the impetus of such action?

These questions are elucidated in considering his understanding of the original perfection of the world and the original perfection of humanity. The former is to be understood as the influence of finite existence upon persons in the world, and makes possible the continuity of religious consciousness.<sup>15</sup> "This is not to be understood as the equivalent of a doctrine of a definite condition of the world, past, present, or future, but it refers to the permanent ever self-identical relations which underlie all historical events."<sup>16</sup> The self-consciousness is traceable back to 'the eternal omnipotent causality'. Schleiermacher posits a relationship between world-consciousness, God-consciousness, and self-consciousness. There is an interconnectedness between them as they relate to the All ('Whence'). There is simultaneous confrontation between the 'given' and the self, betwixt self-consciousness and objective consciousness. There is inherent in the creation of the world the germ which produces or excites individual God-consciousness. Persons are passive in regards to the relation of the operation of the natural world, (which is the instrument for the

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<sup>15</sup>Schleiermacher, *The Christian Faith*, para. 57, p. 233.

<sup>16</sup>George Cross, *The Theology of Schleiermacher* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1911), p. 170.

communication of objective relation to finite actuality), upon individuals. These passive states pass into active states or what Schleiermacher calls *incentives*. That is, the passive state of persons which is the operative influence of the world, determines the receptivity of people to the awakening and shaping of their self-activity.<sup>17</sup> This self-activity is correlated with spirit, the distinction is made between the body and the inner side. The body, uniting persons to the World, serves as mediator for the spirit of humanity and 'the rest of existence', as if the more real world is transcendent to the organic world. This might raise the question, is the real world the outer existence, or the world reached only by the elevation of self-consciousness? But Schleiermacher is speaking of two aspects of corporeal existence. He proceeds to express this aspect of the original perfection of the world by the concept of its knowability. Denoting the body as the real side and the ideal side as the possibility of knowledge.

It does appear that humanity is determined by the influences of the (external) world and in such wise self-activity is merely a reaction, and the feeling of freedom an illusion. This 'true prince of the church'<sup>18</sup> denies this however, and attributes to the spirit an original self-activity which is unlimited. He posits two aspects of receptivity, i.e. instrument and means of expression. A reciprocal self-expression on the part of the world and humanity. It is these two

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<sup>17</sup> Schleiermacher, *The Christian Faith*, para. 59, p. 238.

<sup>18</sup> Stephen Sykes, *Friedrich Schleiermacher* (Richmond: John Knox Press, 1971), p. 51.

relations (self-consciousness accompanying states of self-activity), that give rise to the universal God-consciousness. For Schleiermacher the higher life arises out of an experience of living in history.

In the understanding of the original perfection of humanity, there is a predisposition to God-consciousness which is an inner impulse. This impulse includes a connection between race-consciousness and personal consciousness and these together form original perfection.

Religious experience, however, consists precisely in this, that we are aware of this tendency to God-consciousness as a living impulse; but such an impulse can only proceed from the true inner nature of the being which it goes to constitute.<sup>19</sup>

Religious experience consists in this 'sense and taste for the infinite' as an inner impulse, and that this impulse proceeds from the object of its intentionality. The emergence thus of 'the feeling of sheer dependence' underlies all religious experience and is an ongoing ever present eternal constitution of humanity and the World. The God-consciousness of which Schleiermacher speaks not only connects with the sensible excitations of self-consciousness, but also with those which accompany the cognitive activities, and every other kind of outward activity. There is a sense in which God-consciousness (the religious life) is related to the whole of human finite existence *im Zusammenhang* (in the fulness of its relations).

If the new reformation<sup>20</sup> is to serve as a foundation for better living conditions among people, then the theology of this period in

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<sup>19</sup> Schleiermacher, *The Christian Faith*, para. 60., p. 244.

<sup>20</sup> Robert T. Voelkel, "Schleiermacher and a New Reformation," in his *The Shape of the Theological Task* (Philadelphia: Westminster Press, 1968).

history must carry with it germs for 'dynamic community'. The question has been raised as to whether Schleiermacher has provided such a germ. It is no doubt that he offers the one element necessary to begin a move in this direction, i.e. religious experience as social experience.

It was necessary to carry through on the basic subjective/objective delineations of the religious life. By doing so it is evident that Schleiermacher has offered a vital perspective to the pluralistic reality of modern times. He has also directed the Christian church in a significant way as it is concerned with ministry.

## Chapter 7

CONCLUSIONS: *PRAXIS AND CHALLENGE*

The recent theologians of *praxis* have managed to retrieve the societal and political, not merely existential-individual, meanings inherent in the symbols of Judaism and Christianity. . . . In short the aim of all thought is *praxis*. Such *praxis*, of course, is not to be identified with practice. Rather *praxis* is correctly understood as the critical relationship between theory and practice whereby each is dialectically influenced and transformed by the other.<sup>1</sup>

This study has highlighted Schleiermacher's concern to make meaningful the concept of religion. It can be seen as a revival of a *praxis* foundation for speaking of God's relationship with his creation. To show that Schleiermacher is not a pantheist has enabled us to ask anew the purpose of his methodology. To apprehend just what it was that he struggled with in view of the philosophy and theology that was contemporaneous with him.

*Summary*

Chapter two, "*Hermēneia*," explored three major figures in the history of theology who responded to Schleiermacher, Rudolf Otto, Karl Barth, and Soren Kierkegaard. By their response these men contributed much to the interpretation of Schleiermacher for subsequent thinkers. These three were chosen because of the diverse points of view and the major fields of study they themselves effected. This was an effort to

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<sup>1</sup>David Tracy, *Blessed Rage for Order* (New York: Seabury Press, 1975), p. 243.

show the dynamic of this discussion.

Chapter three, "Cultural Ambience," was designated as a background for understanding the *zeitgeist* in which Schleiermacher emerged as a thinker. It was felt that by perceiving the influences of this age upon him, one could better gain a feel for his engagement with his age, and thus his contributions.

Chapter four, "Religion and the Common Life," was the basic presentation of the relation of God and the World as found in the experience of the religious life. It highlighted the fundamental dialectic of human existence which implies God's creativity.

Chapter five, "Theism or Pantheism," addressed the problem of the relation of God and the World more deeply. It is an attempt to answer the question of Schleiermacher's alleged pantheism.

Chapter six, "Subjective Objectivity," discusses the aspect of Schleiermacher's thought that is largely neglected, i.e. the objective aspect. It tried to show that there is a definite trans-subjective claim of deity in Schleiermacher's thought.

#### *Summary*

The most important theme throughout that serves as a challenge to modern theology, is that of engagement. The meaning of engagement is that of involvement, interlocking, and commitment. It also has the meaning of entering into conflict with. So that when speaking of a Theology of Engagement it is a theology that transcends the merely theoretical. It rather bridges the gap between theory and practice. This theology does not have room for theory that is not applicable to

and for contemporary human needs. It is not however, a theology which is under the dictates of the world, but enters into relation with the world if only in conflict. A theology which does not neglect its fundamental heritage, but combines it with the understanding of God's present activity in history. It is a theology that is both passive and active. It is passive in that it accepts traditional Christian truth, and what is given by God in human existence, and it is active in that it is constantly intermeshed with people, history, and one's world, for transfer, development, and reception. Thus the reciprocity of human existence, i.e. its fundamental dialectic.

This project has been dedicated to two theologians who have advocated such a theology. Both of these theologians understood the call of Christ as in essence inextricably bound with the call of the injustices of the age.

This theology is based upon two main themes which run through Schleiermacher's thought presented here: 1) The immanent-transcendent notion of God. It is an affirmation of God's creativity, and yet also affirms the 'new things' that God is doing and will do. These 'new things' cannot be conceptualized by the human reason so that humanity is in a state of active waiting for God's continual move in history and time.

This is a rejection of the supernaturalistic God that stands so far above the earth and affairs of humans, he becomes meaningless. It is also a rejection of the God who is so identified with the world that deity is an illusion. Rather this is a both/and approach.

2) The web of interrelatedness (*Wirkungszusammenhagen*). In

God's creative act there is the dynamic of community which becomes the primordial destiny (*Bestimmung*) for humanity. This includes persons, nature, and God, an interrelatedness including both dependence and freedom.

This kind of dialectic makes no room for any isolated genuine Christian existence. Thus there is no authentic religious life without involvement with and commitment to human suffering and life.

Therefore the most important aspect of this study is the stress upon community and mutual dependence that is implicit in Schleiermacher's thought. Such a concept is in much demand in today's World of social, political, racial and religious pluralism. The issues raised by the relation of God and the World will remain as a challenge. Schleiermacher's *Universum* has presented classical theism with a definite and complicated question.

Areas for further study that would complete and sharpen our inquiry as well as enlighten our response to Schleiermacher would be: The development of the Schleiermacherian doctrine of God and *Universum*; a more useful definition of pantheism for theological debate; development of the relationship between 'community' and ecclesiology, 'community' and Black and Liberation theologies, along with the conception of 'world-maintenance'; questioning of Schleiermacher's similarity but difference to Charles Hartshorne's panentheism, and Josiah Royce's 'Beloved Community'.

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## APPENDIX

There are two thinkers who followed Schleiermacher, and held similar understandings of the religious experience. First, Ludwig Feuerbach who attacked Christianity choosing the theology of the Reformation, as his major opponent, and more precisely Luther. The second, Josiah Royce, the twentieth century American idealist philosopher.

Feuerbach saw God as the highest subjectivity of man abstracted from himself. God then is man's relinquished self, consciousness of the objective is the self-consciousness of man.<sup>1</sup> He states that since feeling has been held the cardinal principle in religion, the doctrines of Christianity, formerly so sacred, have lost their importance.<sup>2</sup> He further contends that once feeling has become the subjective essence of religion, it in fact is also the objective essence of religion. Feeling then becomes superfluous because one cannot adequately distinguish religious and irreligious feeling. Feuerbach obviously had Schleiermacher in mind even though he does not mention him by name. Feuerbach viewed man as being the beginning, middle, and end of religion. In revelation man merely goes outside of himself, and in order for him to return to his true self (Absoluteness) he must go outside of himself. The secret of theology then is anthropology, the knowledge of God is the knowledge of man.<sup>3</sup>

Even though Feuerbach rejected Schleiermacher's 'feeling of dependence', he shared with him an understanding of a real relation

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<sup>1</sup>Ludwig Feuerbach, *The Essence of Christianity* (New York: Harper & Row, 1957), p. 31.

<sup>2</sup>Ibid., pp. 9, 10.

<sup>3</sup>Ibid., p. 207.

between the subject and the object of religious knowledge. Feuerbach modifies Schleiermacher's argument that man feels God, the feeling of God includes the real being of God, therefore man knows the real being of God. He states that God is feeling itself, and when persons feel God they feel themselves.

The most important affinity however between the two thinkers lies in their shared effort to construct for a modern world, necessary means to retain the value of individual religious expression toward the realization of world community. In view of religion's effort to deny man's existence in the objective world, both uphold the importance of objective natural life and the bond between mankind:

The consciousness of the world is a humiliating consciousness; the creation was an "act of humility"; but the first stone against which the pride of egoism stumbles is the *thou*, the *alter ego*. The *ego* first steels its glance in the eye of a *thou* before it endures the contemplation of a being which does not reflect its own image. My fellow-man is the bond between me and the world. I am, and I feel myself, dependent on the world, because I first feel myself dependent on other men. If I did not need man, I should not need the world. I reconcile myself with the world only through my fellow-man. Without other men, the world would be for me not only dead and empty, but meaningless. Only through his fellow does man become clear to himself and self-conscious; but only when I am clear to myself does the world become clear to me. A man existing absolutely alone would lose himself without any sense of his individuality in the ocean of Nature; he would neither comprehend himself as man nor Nature as Nature. The first object of man is man.<sup>4</sup>

Feuerbach emphasized the I/Thou relationship between men as a corrective for the Christian Faith.

Schleiermacher differed from Feuerbach even though there are those who see him as the logical conclusion of Schleiermacher's thought.<sup>5</sup>

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<sup>4</sup>Ibid., p. 83.

<sup>5</sup>R. Williams, "Schleiermacher and Feuerbach on the Intentionality of Religious Consciousness," *Journal of Religion*, LIII, 1(1973), 424-55.

For Schleiermacher God as "omni-activity" is the ground of community, and his personal attributes are expressed in human relatedness.

Josiah Royce, the second thinker, was concerned about the ethical aspect of the Christian faith. His primary method was an extended description of the human community, he was concerned with the problems of human solidarity and survival in social context. The salvation of the individual for Royce, is a matter of loyal and dedicated service to human community. He saw the Apostle Paul as an example of the belief that individual religious experience is legitimatized by social experience.<sup>6</sup> For him this is the essence of Christianity. He developed the principle that 'loyalty' is the basic moral law. By loyalty, which is meant the practically devoted love of an individual for a community, Royce posits what is the turning point of human history. In order for this loyalty to exist in all persons alike (not uniformity), Royce uncovers the experiential roots of leading Christian ideas, the church, sin, and atonement. All these ideas are in close connection with the doctrine of life, i.e. the philosophy of loyalty.

In answer to the question "In what sense, if any can the modern man consistently be, in creed, a Christian?" he affirms by membership in that community which is universal and necessary to the salvation of man.<sup>7</sup> Royce develops a theory of interpretation which began with the early Christian communities response to the sayings of the Master.

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<sup>6</sup>Josiah Royce, *The Problem of Christianity* (Chicago: Regenery, 1913), I, xxiv.

<sup>7</sup>Ibid., p. 39.

According to this theory religious knowledge emerges via signs.<sup>8</sup> The interpretation then of the Christ event offers vital and essential absolute values of the religious message, of which all mankind may partake. For religious knowledge to be attained, community must be experienced. This 'Beloved Community' exists to overcome the moral burden which the unredeemed individual has. The move beyond self to significant others in common participation is somehow related to world redemption.

Royce does not mention Schleiermacher in his first volume, and whether he read him is unknown by the present author. But the affinities are remarkable. It may be that this is where Schleiermacher was leading with his relational aspect of religious experience. Even though for him the determinative revelatory reality which is mediated through Jesus is complete without interpretation. The possibility for social change seen as original divine intention.

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<sup>8</sup>It may be interesting to compare Tillich's treatment of mediating symbols. See Paul Tillich, *Theology of Culture* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1964)